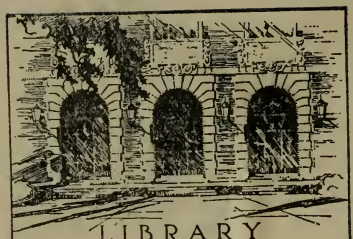

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MORLEY ERNSTEIN

OR

THE TENANTS OF THE HEART.

BY

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"THE ROBBER," "THE GENTLEMAN OF THE OLD SCHOOL,"

ETC. ETC.

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MORLEY ERNSTEIN:

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THE TENANTS OF THE HEART.

CHAPTER I.

The under-workings of the passions in the human heart, the movements and the progress of that central fire in the world of each man's breast—that fire which is never guessed at by the surface, except from some slight and often unobserved indications, or from some violent outburst, like the eruption of a volcano—the underworkings of the passions, I say, are generally far more worthy of the investigation of philosophy, if we would take the trouble, are far more replete with the tragic and the sublime, than all the external demonstrations to which we give so much attention. When sitting

in the midst of a social circle, and often when gay looks and light jests abound, who is there shall say, what are the feelings really within the very bosoms that are next to us—what the passions that are gnawing the core of the hearts that seem all merriment?—the canker-worm of envy—the sharp tooth of hatred—the bitter grinding jaws of disappointment—the locusts of ill-requited love eating up all the green things of hope? Alas! alas! too often in the world in which we live, if we could draw back the veil from the hearts of the most cheerful scene, there would be much weeping amongst us for the sorrows of others, or our own!

The drawing-room of Lady Malcolm was a pleasant and a cheerful room; and—though in the midst of London—she had contrived, by manifold flowers and shrubs, frequently renewed, to give it a certain degree of freshness, an air and a scent of the country, which were wonderfully refreshing to the London-tired senses at the end of a long season. In that drawing-room, with the windows open and the warm air of a summer's night stealing through the half-closed blinds, sat the good lady herself, together with Juliet Carr and Helen Barham, waiting for the arrival of Morley Ernstein. He

was the only person invited, for Lady Malcolm not only wished Helen Barham to remain as quietly as might be in her house, but she also wished Morley and Juliet Carr to have as much of each other's society, uninterrupted, as possible.

As far as all the external circumstances of life could go, nothing could be happier for Helen Barham than the change which had occurred, and the situation in which she was now placed. Good Lady Malcolm was feeling and acting towards her as a mother. That worthy lady, after embracing Morley's proposal, as eagerly as we have seen her do, had for a little time been puzzled by the question of how she was to treat the person whom she had promised to protect, but she had wisely put off the consideration of it till she had seen Miss Barham with her own eyes. When she did see her, however, all doubt upon the matter vanished; the engaging charm which pervaded Helen's whole demeanour, whether in sorrow or joy, gloom or gaiety, affected instantly so very impressible a person as Lady Malcolm; and she had come away, declaring to Juliet as soon as she got into the street, that Helen was the sweetest creature she had ever seen in her life, and that she should not wonder, if properly

brought out, and introduced into good society, were she to end by marrying a Duke. She consequently at once set Helen on a par with herself and Juliet, and treated her as her own child from the moment she entered her house, doing everything that motherly tenderness could do to remove any little sensation of shyness and dependence, and to make her perfectly at home and at ease in her new abode.

Juliet, though perhaps not quite so easily charmed as Lady Malcolm, had not only felt the fascination of Helen Barham's demeanour very strongly, but had been more deeply interested in her than Lady Malcolm herself, entering into all her sensations—perhaps almost divining her thoughts. On their very first interview she had watched her beauty with a curious and attentive eye, even while occupied in recalling her to herself after she had fainted; and when Helen recovered, Juliet remained meditative, if not sad, for some time. There is nothing like woman's heart for finding out woman's secrets, and Juliet —perhaps by questioning herself as to what would have been her own feelings had she been so situated with Morley Ernstein—in a great degree discovered those of Helen Barham.

When the conviction of what the poor girl's sen-

timents towards her deliverer must be, flashed upon Juliet's mind, her sensations were strange, and for a moment beyond all control. The first question she asked herself was, "Does Morley love her after all?—Can he help loving her—so beautiful, so interesting, so much to be pitied?" But the next moment she recollected all she knew of his character, every trait that she had remarked of his demeanour in regard to the very matter with which her thoughts were busied; and, though she had at first clasped her hand upon her heart to stop its insufferable beating, she now took it away relieved, saying in her own mind—"'Tis I whom he loves. Alas, poor Helen Barham!"

For an instant, for a single instant, Juliet Carr had felt the pangs of jealousy, but the moment after, when her feeling of security in Morley's love returned, she reproached herself bitterly for the joy she felt at that which must needs produce another's sorrow. The few hours' calm reflection which intervened between their visit to the fair object of their care, and her arrival at Lady Malcolm's house, calmed down and quieted Juliet's feelings, and enabled her to play her part towards Helen, when she did arrive, in the manner which might be expected

from her character. As a sort of atonement for loving Morley Ernstein, and being beloved by him, as well as from tenderness and interest, and kindness towards Helen, no sister could have shewn her more affectionate care and attention than were displayed by Juliet Carr. She sat with her in the room which had been assigned to her near her own; she aided her to arrange it with taste; she saw if anything was wanting, and had it instantly supplied; she talked with her of future prospects and bright hopes, and lavished on her all those little acts of gentle attention, which removed every feeling of strangeness, and made Helen feel that she had a friend upon whose bosom she could cast herself in danger, or sorrow, or temptation if it should come, and tell her all without fear or hesitation.

That conviction was in itself a relief, a mighty relief to the poor girl's heart; and though her mind still wandered to Morley Ernstein, and thought dwelt, in spite of all her efforts, upon the connexion between him and Juliet Carr, when she looked upon her lovely companion, marked her transcendent beauty, listened to her melodious voice, and experienced such tenderness and generous kindness, she could not

refrain, even in Juliet's presence, from looking down with a sigh, and murmuring indistinctly with a melancholy movement of the head, "no wonder that he loves her."

The day passed over in this manner, but before night, Helen Barham was quite familiar with the house and its inhabitants. Everything that Lady Malcolm saw of her, led that lady to approve her conduct more and more. Her manners were so graceful, her whole demeanour so distinguished, that the good lady began to feel proud of her protégee, and looking from Helen to Juliet, as she sat at dinner, she could not help thinking, that seldom on the face of this earth, had two such beautiful beings sat side by side.

Helen was sad and thoughtful during the early part of the evening, but in consideration of those with whom she dwelt, she struggled against the gloom that oppressed her; sought her usual occupations, and followed her ordinary pursuits. Thus while Lady Malcolm herself fell quietly asleep over a purse that she was netting, and Juliet busied her fingers with embroidery, Helen went on sketching with a masterly hand, though with the carelessness of absent thoughts, a scene from Milton's Paradise Lost, representing the contention of the archangel and the fiend.

Juliet talked to her from time to time, and then came round to view her work. "Why, Helen!" she exclaimed, with the first impulse of surprise, as she looked over her shoulder; "you have drawn a friend of ours for the angel!"

Helen looked up in her face with her large lustrous eyes, but made no reply, and Juliet returned thoughtfully to her seat again. Helen added several more strokes to the other figure, and then pushed it gently across the table to her fair companion, saying, with a sad smile—

"You shall have it, for you are an angel too, I think. It is like him, I believe—though I did not intend it."

Juliet gazed for several minutes intently at the drawing, which was beautifully, though slightly executed, and while she was still thus employed, Sir Morley Ernstein was announced and entered the room.

Lady Malcolm started up out of her sleep; and not a little emotion was felt both by Helen Barham and Juliet Carr. Strange to say, however, Juliet shewed it most. She, who had usually so much command over herself, was now fluttered and agitated. It is true there were sensations in her bosom towards Morley Ernstein, which produced a thrill whenever she saw him; but in the most profound lakes the gushing of

the fountains is hidden by the depth of the waters; and those feelings confined themselves to her heart, and did not at all appear on the surface. In the present instance it was the presence of Helen Barham that agitated her more than the coming of Morley Ernstein. She sympathized with the poor girl deeply, and by a power, which true benevolence really has, she placed herself in the situation of her fair companion so completely, as to feel all that she felt without losing the emotions natural to her own situation also. There was always a great abnegation of self in the character of Juliet Carr, and though she could not have sacrificed Morley's love for any consideration, yet she did wish that he would now speak to Helen first.

But Morley did not do so, and would not have done so for the world, even on Helen's own account. There had been something in her manner that morning which he would not suffer his mind to rest upon, the remembrance of which he had cast from him as an idle vanity, but which, nevertheless, influenced his conduct, making him feel that it would be better to mark at once his attachment to Juliet Carr as strongly as possible. After speaking for a moment, then, with Lady Malcolm, he turned to Juliet, and took

her hand in his, with his face beaming with all the affection that was in his heart. He called her by her Christian name, too, as she had permitted him, and every look and every tone was calculated to leave no doubt on the mind of any one, as to what were his feelings towards her.

Juliet was only the more agitated; but Helen was less so than might have been expected. The marked conduct of Morley towards Juliet Carr did her good. She had previously made up her mind, and read her fate, and the only thing that could have shaken her greatly at that moment, would have been the renewal of doubt and hope. Thus, when Morley turned towards her, and spoke to her, as he had been accustomed to do, kindly, gently, tenderly—ay, tenderly!—for a slight inclination, which he detected in his own breast, to make his manner towards Helen a little less warm than it had been when they were alone together, caused him resolutely to resist such a feeling as dishonourable to her, to Juliet, and to himself—when he spoke to her, then, kindly, gently, and tenderly—as if, in short, he were a brother—she received him, not without emotion, indeed, but with a much greater appearance of calmness than she had previously hoped to obtain.

Morley congratulated her upon her change of abode, and upon the friendship of Lady Malcolm; for it was a part of his plan, and, indeed, was only consistent with his impetuous character, to go straightforward to every difficult or unpleasant point, and never to be satisfied till all was said that it might be necessary to say. Many people do great things by avoiding difficulties, but bolder minds love the task of overcoming them. He spoke at once, therefore, of the change which had taken place in Helen's situation, though he knew it might awaken unpleasant thoughts, feeling that as much must be referred to, and even discussed at different periods, concerning her past and her future fate, it would be better to touch upon the subject immediately, lest every hour of reserve should render it more difficult. He then added, in a rather lower voice—

"I have seen your brother, my dear Miss Barham, and we are to meet again to-morrow; when I hope all things will be settled to your satisfaction. In the meantime, I need not ask if you are comfortable and happy with these friends, for I know Lady Malcolm is all kindness, especially where she meets with undeserved sorrow. I think, too," he added, turning his

eyes to Juliet, "that we might very well trust the happiness of any one to Miss Carr's tenderness."

"We have done what we could to soothe her, Morley," replied Juliet Carr, "but it is not to be expected that Miss Barham should yet be quite as cheerful as we will hope to see her. She can amuse herself, however, even now, and at the same time gratify her friends—Look here!"

"Oh, no, no!" exclaimed Helen, trying to prevent Juliet from shewing the drawing; but ere she could stop her, it was in Morley's hand—

"Good Heavens!" he exclaimed, as soon as he had cast his eyes upon it, "Why this is Lieberg!"

"Oh, no, no!" exclaimed Helen again, "I did not mean it for anybody. Indeed, I never thought of what I was drawing!"

"But this cannot have been by accident, surely," said Morley; "the likeness is so striking. Did you ever see Count Lieberg, Miss Barham?"

"I saw him this morning," replied Helen, at once. "He called upon me—not long before Lady Malcolm came—to tell me, what you had told me before regarding my brother."

"And did he do anything to offend you?"

asked Morley, looking at the drawing with a smile, as he marked the character in which she had depicted Lieberg.

"Oh, no!" replied Helen, "nothing; on the contrary, he was as kind as he could be; but I can assure you I meant nothing by that drawing, and had not an idea that I was sketching any one, till Miss Carr remarked one likeness; and now you have remarked another. If there be any, it is purely accidental, though, perhaps, without thinking of it, one naturally takes the features which one has lately seen, as I have remarked after reading a book, the thoughts come back to us as if they were our own. Will you give it to me," and taking it out of Morley's hand, she added, speaking to Juliet—"You must let me tear it, and I will draw you another.—You shall have the angel as before," she said, with a sad smile, and an earnest look into Juliet's eyes, "but I must change the face of the fiend; as it seems that I most unintentionally took that of one who has shewn himself anything but unkind to me and mine."

"Tear it—tear it, Helen!" said Juliet; "I am sure you did not mean to give the portrait of any one in such a character."

"On my word I did not," replied Helen, and

then, after putting her hand to her brow for an instant, she added—"Come, dear Miss Carr, to make up for destroying the drawing I gave you, if Sir Morley Ernstein will sit down on the sofa and talk to you, I will take his portrait. I am sure you will be glad to have it, for you said you had known him long. I can sketch very quickly, and I once thought of trying to make my bread by portrait-painting. But I took fright at the thought of all the people that might come to me, and gave up the idea."

Juliet Carr blushed at the proposal, partly with feelings of pleasure, but partly abashed; for the remembrance that Morley had not yet said one word which could justify her, or any one, in looking upon his attachment to her as certain, was still present to her mind. She answered not, then, but Lady Malcolm replied for her, eagerly—

"Do—pray do, my dear child—and then you shall copy it for me."

At the same time Morley took his seat upon the sofa by the side of Juliet Carr; Lady Malcolm rang for tea; and Helen, while she pursued her work, joined in the conversation, not only frequently, but gaily, as if the object on which she was employed had given her back her cheer-

fulness. Once, when Juliet was about to rise, she exclaimed, quickly—

"Sit still—pray sit still—he will not remain in the same attitude if you move!" and, about ten minutes after, she beckoned to Lady Malcolm, asking her, "Will that do?"

"Oh, beautiful, beautiful!" exclaimed Lady Malcolm—"that is quite perfect!"

"Not yet," said Helen, and she added some touches more.

Juliet became impatient to see the sketch likewise, and, starting up playfully, she said—"I will be excluded no longer, Helen."

When she came round, however, her cheek took the colour of a rose. It was not alone Morley's portrait, but her own likewise, that Helen Barham had drawn; and, with a skill that nothing but intense feeling could have taught her, she had cast into the looks of both, as they seemed gazing upon each other, that expression of deep affection which she was but too sure was in their hearts.

Morley followed Juliet to Helen's side, almost at once, and gazing upon the picture, he first smiled with pleasure; but, the next instant, a thoughtful expression came over his countenance, and he looked down upon the beautiful head of Helen Barham—as she bent over it, rest-

ing her cheek upon her hand—with sensations that it would be difficult to describe. He asked himself hurriedly, what had been really her feelings? and then he would not suffer his heart to answer the question. He voluntarily suffered his ideas to remain confused; but in their vagueness was mingled not only much apprehension, lest there should be those things in the bosom of Helen which might affect her after-peace, but pity for her in every way, and a certain portion, if not of unmerited self-reproach, at least of regret, that it had not been possible for him to protect and support her from the beginning, through the medium of others.

Helen, however, seemed pleased with her work, she forced herself to be cheerful, and the evening passed over apparently brightly for all. The conversation, which had been diverted, for the time, from the subject of Count Lieberg's visit, returned to it ere long, and Helen recapitulated, in her own artless manner, all that had passed. At length she came to speak of his question in regard to calling upon her the following day, and she added—

"I was quite sure that I might tell him I was coming hither—"

Morley started, with a feeling of appre-

hension, but Helen instantly added—"However, as you had told me I was not to mention the fact to any one, I refrained, and merely said that I was seldom out, knowing that you could inform him of what you thought fit, afterwards."

"You did quite right, dear Miss Barham," replied Morley—"you did perfectly right. I entreated you to tell no one, and if I had wished any exception made, I would have said so."

Both Helen and Juliet gazed at Morley with some surprise; but Lady Malcolm instantly read a comment upon her young friend's reply, saying—"He is too gay a personage, Helen—this Count Lieberg—to be a very safe intimate for you. Not that I mean, my dear child, he would or could do you any harm; nor do I know, indeed, of any harm that he ever did do; but some men establish for themselves, by tolerating all vices, and associating intimately with persons of dissolute habits, the reputation of licentiousness, even when they do not deserve it. Now, I never in all my life heard the least harm of this Count Lieberg. I never saw his name in the papers, or anything of that kind; but, at the same time, he is a great deal with people who are notorious for dissipated

habits, and consequently he is looked upon as one of the same class, though, perhaps, the best of the class. Nevertheless, Morley was quite right, Helen; there is no need at all of his knowing where you are, and, to say the truth, I think it better he should not."

Morley said nothing, but he was not a little obliged to Lady Malcolm for saving him the pain of an explanation; and, shortly after, he took his leave, promising to return the following day, and let Helen know what was the result of his second conference with her brother.

As soon as he was gone, Helen rose to retire to her room. A slight degree of paleness had come over her face, a look of exhaustion, which Juliet remarked, and very well understood. She came round, then, to where Helen stood, and putting her arm gently round her, she kissed her cheek, saying, in a low voice—"I think, Helen, you are more of an angel than any of us."

Helen pressed her hand gently in hers; and though not a word more was spoken on either part, each felt that they understood the other; and Helen Barham, with swimming eyes, retired to her chamber, and wept with very mingled feelings.

CHAPTER II.

The interview between Morley Ernstein and William Barham was to take place at the hotel in Berkeley-square ; and Morley had written to Lieberg, giving him notice that the young man would be there, and begging him, if possible, to meet him, as the draft was to be presented on the ensuing day, so that no time ought to be lost. Lieberg breakfasted an hour earlier than usual, but it was not with the object of being in time for the proposed meeting, as mid-day was the hour appointed; and as soon as he had done breakfast, he got into his cabriolet to drive to the house of Helen Barham.

When he reached the house, he got out and knocked himself, and his keen and marking eye at once perceived that it was not Helen's neat-

looking maid who opened the door, but, on the contrary, a person bearing the look, which is very peculiar, of people that are put in to keep houses, which would otherwise be vacant.

In reply to his demand for Miss Barham, the woman said, in a short, quick tone—"She's not here, sir—she's gone."

"Pray, where is she gone to?" demanded Lieberg, in a quiet tone, as if the tidings did not surprise him in the least.

"I can't tell, sir," answered the woman. "Two ladies called for her, and took her away with them, but I don't know where, nor who they were."

"Ladies!" said Lieberg, with some emphasis; but the other replied immediately, with a toss of her head—"Yes, ladies, every inch of them; that I'll answer for; and so is she, too, poor thing, though she is not so rich as some; but as for their being ladies, the servant called his mistress 'My Lady' twice—that's all I know."

"And pray who put you in here, to take care of the house?" said Lieberg.

"Why, the landlord, to be sure," replied the woman; "and he bade me, too, take great care of all Miss Barham's things, and to dust all that's in the drawing-room every day."

"So, then," said Lieberg, "Miss Barham has left some things behind her?"

"Oh, yes, a great many," replied the woman, who seemed not to be in the most respondent humour in the world; "but really, sir, I cannot stay answering questions all day. I have told you everything I know about the young lady, and that is little enough."

"It is so," replied Lieberg; and getting into his vehicle, without farther comment, he drove away.

As he was still a full hour and a half before his time, he sought for occupation, and to all appearance gave not a second thought to Helen Barham's place of residence. It was not so, however, in reality; and as he drove away, he repeated twice—"This is Ernstein's doing!" But he had now regained all that self-possession which Helen's beauty had for a time disturbed; and when—after attending a sale of pictures and bronzes, at Phillipps's Rooms, for about an hour—he proceeded to visit Morley Ernstein, his look was as calm and cheerful, his manner as unembarrassed and graceful, as ever. Not one word passed his lips in regard to his visit of that morning to the house of Helen Barham, though there was some meaning in the smile with which

he shook hands with Morley on their meeting. To the call he had made on the preceding day, however, he referred at once, saying—"Well, Morley, I have seen this fair object of your benevolence, and must confess that her beauty, her grace, and her talent too, far exceed what I had expected. I cannot help thinking you a great fool, begging your pardon for so saying; but I suppose we shall never think alike upon these matters, and I shall give up attempting to convert you to my doctrines, for every man must seek happiness in his own way; and I do not see why a man's prejudices should not be considered as a part of his property which it is felony to rob him of, as well as anything else."

"Why, Lieberg," replied Morley, "prejudices, I should think, would be a sort of property of which, like paving-stones in a man's pocket, it would be kind to free him as soon as possible. But I rather think the dispute between you and me would be, as to which of my views are prejudices—which are principles. I do not mean to claim any outrageous morality, but in what I am doing now, I am quite sure I am right."

"I hope you are equally sure that you will be successful," replied Lieberg; "for my part, I think I shall soon leave the matter in your hands

altogether, for I have some intention, ere the earth, and all it bears about with it, be a month older, of setting out for the Continent, and taking, what the people who travel and write books, call 'an autumn tour,' somewhere."

"Why, I thought," said Morley, "that you were going down to the house of Lord Medway for the season?"

"He invited me," answered Lieberg; "but I am not in a humour this year, either for stalking after partridges through a turnip-field, or for the beastly butchery of a battue. The last time I was at one, I felt myself like the dog that the man shewed about London some time ago—'Billy,' you know, that killed a hundred rats in a minute—and I determined never to go to such barn-door slaughter again. But here comes this good youth, I suppose," he added, seeing the door open; "do not tell him at first. We may see some of the workings of the passions, which is better sport than a battue."

Morley thought that it was as cruel sport, too; but the waiter announcing that a gentleman desired to speak with him, he directed him to be shewn in, and the moment after William Barham, with his pale, dissolute countenance, and his long light hair straggling as usual over his

face, entered the room, but stopped suddenly short, on beholding Lieberg.

"Good morning, Mr. Barham," said Morley; "this gentleman is a friend of mine, who has promised me to do what he can to assist you. Take a seat, and let us talk over this affair."

"William Barham glanced first at Morley, and then at Lieberg, and then at the door, as if he would fain have made his escape; but finding that impossible, he sat down, and looked doggedly at the table. Morley turned to Lieberg, as if to ask him to begin the discussion; but certainly Lieberg did it in a way that Morley the least expected and approved.

"I find, Mr. Barham," he said, fixing his dark, piercing, intelligent eyes upon him, with a gaze that seemed to look into his very heart—"I find that you have committed a forgery, and are likely to be hanged."

William Barham started up from his seat, and stared at Lieberg and Morley with eyes full of the wild, wandering expression of terror.

"I have it from the best authority," said Lieberg, still bending upon him the same eagle glance. "Cousins, the Bow-street officer, who is watching for you, told me the whole story."

The lad sank down in the chair again, clasped

his hands over his eyes, and sobbed aloud. Still Lieberg held him under his dark, firm gaze, and Morley, puzzled and surprised, did not know well whether to interfere, and endeavour to assuage the unnecessary suffering which his companion was inflicting upon the unhappy young man, or not. A pause of more than a minute ensued, and even a small pause, under such circumstances, is long. Perhaps Lieberg himself was in doubt how he should proceed.

"Is it not so?" he said, at length; and then, as the boy sat silent, he turned his eyes towards Morley Ernstein with a strange expression, which Morley did not well understand. There was a degree of unsated fierceness in it, and yet it seemed to ask—"Shall I rack him farther?—Will you abhor me, and interpose, if I do?"

Morley made a gesture, as if supplicating him to forbear, and in an instant the whole expression of Lieberg's countenance changed.

"Hark, young man!" he continued, speaking to young Barham, in a milder tone—"Do you know who I am?"

"No, sir," replied the unhappy youth; "I never saw you before, that I know of."

"And yet you have used my name for five hundred pounds!" said Lieberg.

The lad instantly sprang off his seat, and cast himself upon his knees at Lieberg's feet, exclaiming—"Forgive me—oh, forgive me!"

"I will forgive you," replied Lieberg, "upon one condition, which is, that you at once quit this country, and go to one of the Colonies—whichever I and my friend, Sir Morley Ernstein, may determine. You shall be furnished with money for your passage."

"But how shall I live when I am there?" exclaimed the youth. "I can but do as I have done here, and get into trouble again."

"There is no fear of that," interposed Morley; "some place or some occupation shall be found for you, which will put you above want, and if you behave well, means will be taken to procure your advancement."

"Besides," said Lieberg, "your sister will in all probability be able to do something for you. At all events, I and my friend, Sir Morley Ernstein, pledge ourselves that you shall be taken care of, if you conduct yourself properly. I must have no hesitation—this is your only chance of escaping the gallows, so choose quickly."

"Oh, I have chosen—I have chosen!" cried the young man, at once. "It would, of course, be far better for me to go and take my chance there, than stay here, and be hanged to a certainty."

"That is according to taste," answered Lieberg, who could not refrain from one of his bitter jests, even at that terrible moment; "however, if such be your opinion, come to me to-morrow at this same hour, and I will shew you the note you drew, paid by my banker."

"But," said the boy, gazing earnestly in his face, as if to discover what was passing in Lieberg's inmost thoughts, yet with a look of cunning fear also, both lest he should offend and lest he should be deceived: "but—but—suppose you should change your mind!"

"And hang you after all!" rejoined Lieberg, with a contemptuous sneer: "it would be a very pleasant trick, young gentleman, for any of your present friends—such as Neville and others. But be so good as to recollect, that I have nothing to gain by hanging you: were I a surgeon, there might be some object, for I dare say you would make a very good subject for the anatomist's knife; but I am not a surgeon. Moreover, remember that if I wanted to send you to the gallows, I should have nothing to do this moment but to put my hand on your collar, call in the waiter, and send for an officer."

He took a step forward as he spoke, and the boy, in an agony of terror, started back, and

looked behind him, as if he expected to see the whole array of Bow-street at the other side of the room.

"Now mark me, my good youth," said Lieberg, and answer me straightforwardly; "will you, or will you not come, as I have directed you?"

"I will, upon my honour, sir," replied the boy.

"Your honour!" exclaimed Lieberg; "but I have got a better hold upon you than your honour. Mark me, my good sir, if you do not come precisely to the minute, you will find yourself at the new drop before a month be over. The sessions are coming on, and we will make short work with you, for I will not be trifled with. Do not suppose, either, that you can escape, for you ought to know well enough, that every movement you make is known, and I could have taken you out of your bed last night, if I had thought right, for I knew quite well where you were."

"Where?" exclaimed the youth, with a shrewd look; "where?"

"Where you should not have been," replied Lieberg, sternly; "not many yards from —— street, in the Strand."

The colour that comes up from agitation, not from shame—for alas, he was past that point—rose in the boy's countenance, and he only replied, "I will come—indeed I will."

Morley Ernstein had perceived from the first that Lieberg wished to conduct the whole business with William Barham himself, and although he might feel a suspicion, of which he was at the same time ashamed, regarding his companion's motives; yet he felt not only that he had no right, but also that it would be imprudent to interfere in a matter which entirely depended upon Lieberg himself. He had therefore abstained, as far as possible, from saying anything, but he now added a caution, which was totally independent of his friend's proceedings.

"If you will take my advice," he said, speaking to William Barham, "you will, in the meantime, that is to say, before you go to Colonel Lieberg's, avoid all your recent companions; and going home at once, remain quietly, without setting your foot beyond the doors till to-morrow."

Remarking that the boy hesitated, and answered nothing, and knowing what a hold evil habits have upon the mind, Morley resolved to

try what fear would do, and for that purpose to make use of the information he had gained from Higgins. "I advise you alone for your own good," he said, "and to prevent you from missing the only chance of safety. You know quite well, that there are a number of other people engaged in this affair. Now those scoundrels will be glad enough to keep you here, in order to get your neck into the noose, instead of their own."

"I will peach against them all, if they do!" replied the youth, vehemently.

"That will not save you," replied Morley; "you are a principal, they are only accessories."

"I will not go near any of them," exclaimed the boy suddenly—"I will not go near any of them."

"Well, then, keep your resolution," rejoined Morley, "and you will do well. I pledge myself for your safety, as well as Colonel Lieberg, if you go to him to-morrow; but if you fail, I tell you as he has done, I abandon you from that moment, and will take no farther interest in you. Do you know where he lives?"

The young man replied in the affirmative, and took up his hat as if to depart, but then looked hesitatingly, first at Morley, and then at

Lieberg, and then at Morley again. At length, however, he said, addressing the latter—"But I wanted to speak with you, Sir Morley—can't I have a word with you for a minute?"

Morley caught the quick eye of Lieberg glancing from the boy's face to his, and he replied at once: "If what you want to say refers to this business, it must be said to Colonel Lieberg, not to me, for upon him alone does your fate depend—or, at least, it must be said in his presence."

"It is not about that at all," answered the youth; "it is something which nobody has anything to do with, but you and I."

"Let him speak with you—let him speak with you, Morley," said Lieberg; "I am going to make a call on the other side of the square, and will be back with you again in ten minutes."

Thus saying, he left the room, and the young man, after gazing in Morley's face for a few moments, demanded, abruptly—"Pray where is my sister, sir?"

"Your sister is quite safe," replied Morley, in a calm tone, "and under the protection of those who will take care that no harm happens to her."

"That is to say, under yours, I suppose," said

William Barham, looking at him with a keen and eager glance; "but I'll tell you what, sir, if such is the case, I think I have a right to ask, that you should settle something upon her, that she may not come to poverty too."

Morley grew angry. "You young scoundrel!" he said, "I have a great inclination to take you up, and throw you out of that window into the square. You have a right to ask, indeed! You, who would have sold your sister to a low and vagabond swindler—you, now to talk of having any right to meddle in her affairs!",

"You are wrong, sir," said the young man, boldly, and with a more straightforward tone than Morley had seen him yet assume; "you are wrong, sir; I would not have sold my sister. I would not have taken a penny for myself. Now that the truth must come out, I will tell you how it was—a man will do many things to save his life—what is there that he wont do, indeed?"

"Nothing dishonourable, if he be not a coward," answered Morley.

"Coward, or no coward!" rejoined the young man—"coward, or no coward, no man likes the gallows, and it was to save myself from that, that I did what I did; besides, I saw that, some day or another, she would not have bread to eat.

She has been forced to sell almost everything, even now. Neville offered to settle five hundred a-year upon her, if I would consent, and to hang me if I didn't. So I had no choice; but I would not have taken a farthing from him myself, for all the world."

"You are not quite so bad as I thought you," replied Morley; "but, nevertheless, you are an atrocious scoundrel, and not a bit better for being a coward too. In regard to your sister, however, if you have really any feeling for her —and I can hardly think that such is the case with one who would prey upon her in the way that you have done—make your mind easy; she is no farther under my protection, than that I will see she is not subjected either to insult or annoyance. She is with two ladies who have taken an interest in her; one, a lady of high rank, and one, a young lady who is very dear to me. They will provide for and take care of her; but, as to your present demand, I should be wronging her and myself both, were I to do anything which, even in the eyes of the world, might cause it to be supposed there exists any other connexion between myself and her, than interest in her fate, and sorrow for her misfortunes."

"I suppose—" said the young man; but Morley stopped him at once.

"There is nothing more, sir, to be said upon the subject," he exclaimed. "I am very likely to be made angry in this matter; and, therefore, the less you speak, or suppose, the better."

"I was only going to say," replied the young man, "that I suppose, of course, as you know where she is, you'll have no objection to my seeing her."

"I certainly do know where she is," answered Morley; "but you will easily understand that, as she removed from her own house for the purpose of keeping at a distance from the influence you had so misused, and from the insulting solicitations which you had permitted and encouraged, there is not the slightest chance of your being permitted to see her. It was from yourself and your acquaintances that she fled; and, therefore, you will know nothing farther about her than you do know now, till you embark on board a vessel for one of the colonies. Your sister's address will then be furnished to you; you can write to her, if your wishes prompt you to do so, and she will answer you, informing you of her own situation, hopes, and prospects. This is all I have to say

upon the subject, and you must expect nothing more."

The young man frowned upon him fiercely as he spoke; and after looking at him with a bitter and a disappointed glance, for a moment or two, he said—"God give you as hard measure!"

"I hope he may give me just the same," replied Morley; "for I can call him to witness that I am acting as I judge best for the happiness both of yourself and her."

"Ay," said the young man, thoughtfully, "I may, some time or another, have the means of paying you this;" and without more ado, he quitted the room.

"He is a determined young villain!" was Morley's comment, as Helen's brother left him. "How strange it is that we sometimes see the gifts, both of mind and person, so unequally apportioned in the same family! Beauty, and talent, and virtue in one member of it, and vice, stupidity, and deformity in another. Who, even in look, would take that youth for Helen's brother?"

He had not long to consider the matter farther, for Lieberg soon came back, full of schemes of pleasure and amusement. He had a thou-

sand things for Morley to see; he had a thousand things for Morley to do; and it was with difficulty that his friend, upon the excuse of other business, freed himself from him for an hour or two, in order that he might, as he had promised, convey to Helen Barham tidings of what had passed in regard to her brother. Perhaps it might have been a truer way of putting the matter, if we had said: in order to avail himself of the excuse he had made for visiting Juliet Carr. He promised, however, to join Lieberg in the park within two hours, and, certainly, those two hours were amongst the sweetest that ever he knew in life. He found Juliet Carr sitting with Lady Malcolm; Helen was in her own room; and after the elder lady had remained some short time, she rose, discreetly saying that she would send Miss Barham to hear what tidings he had brought. Juliet begged Lady Malcolm to let her go; and, I believe, that if one could have seen into her bosom, her heart would have been found beating terribly as she made the proposal. Lady Malcolm, however, replied—"I am going up for another pair of gloves, Juliet, and therefore I will tell her as I go."

Juliet and Morley were left alone. Strange

to say, however, they both remained silent for several minutes. There was much that Morley desired to say, but yet the thought that Helen might come down every moment made him pause and hesitate, and lose even the time that he had. Juliet, on her part, divined something of what was passing in his breast, and she was afraid of speaking first, for she knew, whatever topic she chose, her voice would tremble so as to shew that her thoughts were busy with agitating subjects.

I do believe that seldom, if ever, has a declaration of love been made in this world without being managed in the most awkward way that it is possible to conceive. Indeed, though it may seem a contradiction in terms to say that imperfection is a part of perfection, yet I do believe that awkwardness is necessary to a proper declaration; for it is scarcely possible to believe two persons to be very much in love with each other, without being greatly agitated at that moment, and, consequently, not sufficiently master of their own thoughts to act with calmness and propriety.

Morley, however, at length discovered that the pause must not last any longer; and, as it was quite out of the question at that moment to

talk of any indifferent subject, he went round the table, seated himself on the sofa by the side of Juliet, took her right hand, which lay idle in her lap, and pressing his lips upon it, added the small word "Juliet."

Juliet answered nothing, but sat with her beautiful eyes bent down, the colour glowing in her cheeks, her lip quivering, her bosom panting. Morley was beloved, and he felt it. "Juliet," he repeated—"Juliet, dear girl, after what I see, need I ask you any questions?"

"Oh, no, no!" murmured Juliet, turning her head slowly round, still bent so that he could scarcely see her glowing face for the rich hair that clustered over it; and, leaning her forehead and her eyes upon his shoulder, she repeated—"oh, no, no!"

The doors of Lady Malcolm's house were such as doors should always be, and opened noiselessly. Juliet's face was hid upon Morley's shoulder—her hand was clasped in his—his eyes were bent in tenderness upon her—his arm was thrown around her—when the door opened without their seeing it—closed again softly the moment after; and they remained alone for near an hour.

Alas! poor Helen Barham!

CHAPTER III.

William Barham was punctual to his hour; but Lieberg made him wait for fully twenty minutes in an empty room, looking out into the dull back court of a London house, where there was nothing to amuse his mind within the chamber or without: not a picture, not a print upon the walls: not the sight of a chimney, the smoke of which would have given occupation to the eye: not an odd-looking table, with carved legs: not anything, in short, on which the energies of the spirit could spend themselves. The very carpet was in long straight lines of monotonous colours, and the walls were painted of a blank greyish hue.

The mind, when surrounded by dulness from which it cannot escape, is like the scorpion when

hemmed in by fire, and turns to sting itself. That room seemed the very abode of gloom and despondency. The windows were dusty, and admitted but little light; they were not as regularly opened as they ought to have been, and there was a closeness in the atmosphere, a smell of desolation, if we may so call it, which made one feel faint. The grate looked somewhat rusty from neglect, and there were no fire-irons.

William Barham first walked to a window, and looked out, but nothing met his eye, except the tall, unpleasant, dingy brick wall of an opposite house, without a single casement looking that way. He then turned, and gazed round the room. It was all cheerless and dull. His eye found nothing on which it could rest. It was empty and gloomy as a heart that has been bereaved of the object of its love. He tried the window again, and then let his eye run over the walls of the room; but all was dark and sad. There was not even a Greek border on the broad expanse of dull, grey painted stucco, with which the mind might form a labyrinth for thought to lose herself withal. He walked up and down for a moment or two, and then cast himself down upon a chair, and his fancy gave itself up to that which was most painful—his own fate and circumstances.

Did Lieberg do it on purpose? Who can say? There are few men who know human nature better than he did. There are few who could more correctly appreciate the effect of solitary thought, with gloomy adjuncts, upon a mind loaded with crime, and weakened by vice and intemperance. None, then, could judge better what would be that effect upon William Barham, and yet he had ordered him, with particular care, to be placed in that room, which he himself had never entered above once or twice since he had hired those apartments; and yet while the youth remained there, Lieberg was not occupied with any important affair. He was trifling with some objects of art; writing a note or two in answer to invitations; doing a thousand things, in short, that might have been done at any other time. It seemed, certainly, that he calculated upon producing a particular effect upon the mind of the unhappy boy who was in his power.

William Barham's eye, in the meantime, strained upon the floor. It grew more and more anxious in expression, its gaze more and more intense. He looked as if horror-struck with some object on which his eyes fell upon the carpet—but the unhappy boy saw nothing before him but his own fate. Remorse, if not repentance,

visited his heart! He thought of all that he had done, of all that he might have done; he saw that, by his own folly, and by his own crimes, at the best he had driven himself from his native land, and had, but for an accident, condemned himself to death, to an ignominious and terrible death. He had lost all the advantages of a fair education, an honourable teaching, and of a good example. He had voluntarily chosen evil when good was within his grasp, and now the consequences had fallen upon his head, without any place of shelter, any hope, any refuge, except in the mercy of a man who had shewn him some harshness, and whose objects he was strongly inclined to doubt. He had come thither with a palpitating heart, and he remained in agitation and distress.

Minute after minute went by, and each one seemed an age, till at length he began to think —"Is this man deceiving me?—Perhaps he is playing me false!—Perhaps even now he has sent for the officers of justice to seize their prey!"

He started up and approached the door, intending to steal out if he found no one, and to say that he could not wait any longer, if he met with any of the servants in the passage. There was a footman within a few yards, however, and when he had repeated that which he had made

up his mind to speak, the man answered, with the cold sauciness of a London lackey,—"My master said you were to wait for him, and so you must wait, if you please."

The man stood directly in the way, and William Barham re-entered the room, with a sinking heart. His thoughts, hurried and confused, first turned to flight, but flight, he soon saw, was impossible. The window was high—there was a fall of five-and-twenty feet, or more, into the area below. His next thought was, what else could give him safety? Where was there any other hope? "This man must want something," he thought. "He must have some object, some purpose, some end to answer!—What can it be?—I will do anything, everything, if he will but spare my life."

It was at that moment that Lieberg, as if he had calculated it by a watch, sent to call the unfortunate William Barham to his presence; and when the youth appeared, he questioned him sternly and steadily, as to the whole transaction of the forgery, writing down his replies. Had William Barham been an old and wily offender, he might have refused to plead in this illegitimate sort of court; but fear now superseded everything: even natural cunning gave way

before it, and he told all, though he saw Lieberg taking notes of each word he spoke.

"Now," asked the interrogator, when he had finished, "will you sign that?" and he put the paper before him.

"But will you promise me safety?" said the boy, torn by terrors of several kinds, and gazing upon the countenance of Lieberg with eyes that seemed as if they would start from their sockets—"will you promise me safety?"

"Yes," answered Lieberg, "I will promise you—but on one condition, that you will help me with your whole heart and mind in something that I desire to accomplish."

"Oh, that I will!" exclaimed the youth, "in anything that you like."

"In *anything?*" said Lieberg, with emphasis, and at the same time holding up his finger, to mark more particularly, that he had some especial object.

The blood rose slightly in William Barham's cheek, but the game was for life and death, and he had made up his mind. "Yes," he replied, nodding his head significantly; "perhaps I understand what you mean. But I say, I will help you in anything you like."

"That is right," answered Lieberg, "that is

quite right; and if you do help me, instead of death, or exile, and poverty, and privation, and gnawing want, you shall have comfort, and respectability, and affluence, in your own land."

The youth's eyes sparkled, and Lieberg went on, "Attach yourself to my fortunes," he continued, "and you are safe. I tell you fairly, all I wish you to sign this paper for, is, that I may have such a hold upon you, that neither any of those rascally companions whom you have unfortunately met with, nor any of the whining Methodists and hypocrites who are scarcely better than the others, may ever persuade you to play me false in this matter. Mark me! It is not any knavery on your part that I fear, it is weakness; but I think you know me well enough, to be sure that I will hang you, as certain as I live, if you fail me——"

"But will you certainly spare me, if I do not?" cried the youth. "Will you write it down?"

Lieberg paused for a moment, in meditation, drawing in his eyelids, as if to shut out even the daylight from his busy brain, and he replied, at length—

"Very well, I will, marking the condition, that you pledge yourself to assist me in one

particular object, with your whole power and might."

"Very well," said the youth, and Lieberg wrote down the stipulations.

The boy signed, what might be called, his confession, and Lieberg put his hand to the promise. After he had done so, however, he shook his head, gazing on the boy with a smile full of pity and contempt.

"I will keep that promise, my good youth, firmly," he said, "but at the same time I will tell you, it is of no earthly value; for I have nothing to do but to let this bill slip into the hands of the Bow Street officers, and you are arrested, tried, and executed in the shortest possible time. No promise of mine could save you. It is the state that prosecutes, the law that condemns. I have nothing to do with it but to swear that this name, purporting to be mine, is not my handwriting," and he took out of his pocket-book the identical bill which William Barham had forged, and laid his finger upon the fatal words, "Frederick Lieberg," at the bottom.

The unhappy youth gazed at it, with eyes of eager fire—and oh, what would he have given to snatch it from the hand of him that held it, and

tear it into a thousand pieces that moment! The bright eyes of Lieberg seemed to read his very thoughts, and again the dark and bitter smile curled his lip, as he said—

"You cannot get it, my good youth. It will remain with me till there is a stronger bond between you and I, and what I desire is accomplished.—Where is your sister?"

"I do not know," replied the youth, boldly, "Do you not know?—I thought you did."

"No, indeed," replied Lieberg, "I am utterly ignorant. But we must both know ere long. This is the first business we have before us.—You tell me true, I see it—but how happens it that she was removed without your knowledge?"

"I was away for two days," replied the youth, "and when I came back she was gone. But he knows—that Sir Morley Ernstein! Cannot you get him to tell you?"

"I would not ask him for this right hand," replied Lieberg, "but we will soon find out without him."

"He refused to tell me," said the youth; "he would give me no tidings, indeed, but that she is safe and with two ladies, one of whom is a lady of rank."

"Ha!" exclaimed Lieberg. "A lady of rank? Who can that be? And he positively refused to let you know where she is?"

"That he did," answered the youth; "but I'll tell you what he told me, too; he said that I should know where she is, and she should write to me, as soon as I was aboard ship to go to the colonies. Can't we make something of that, sir?"

"Certainly," answered Lieberg, "we will make everything of that, if we cannot do what we desire before; for that might produce a long delay, which must be avoided if possible.—Oh, we will arrive at it!" he said, after a moment's thought—"where did you sleep, last night?"

"In our own house," replied the boy. "The rent is paid, the woman told me, and she is put in to keep it, with seven shillings a week; but the place is still ours, till the twenty-ninth of September."

"Well then," said Lieberg, "go back at once to the good woman who is in the house, and in the course of the evening get her to tell you exactly what was the appearance of the ladies who came for your sister, and what was the livery of the servant whom she talked of to me. Whether he was a tall man or a short man, and, in a

word, all the particulars that she can furnish you with. Do not let her see that you are cross-questioning her, for I suspect, from her manner to me yesterday morning, she has been told not to tell the truth to any one. You must therefore proceed cautiously."

"Oh, I understand—I understand!" replied the boy. "I must fish it out, you mean."

"Exactly," said Lieberg, with a smile at the expression. "Fish it out, and come to me at six o'clock to day. I shall then be dressing for dinner, but you will be admitted; and now, as perhaps you are in want of money, there is a ten-pound note for you. If we proceed successfully, your fortunes are begun."

The youth took the money eagerly. It was certainly the wages of iniquity, but evil—whatever be its kind—always smoothes the road for more; and William Barham had so often tasted burning pleasures bought by money wrongly acquired, that there were no great scruples left in his mind. His sister's honour and soul, her happiness, and her peace of mind, he was very ready to sell for the combined temptation of safety and enjoyment; and, taking the money greedily, he gave Lieberg a meaning smile, which even sickened the superior demon with whom he was

dealing; for surely it is a part of the punishment which evil spirits are destined to feel, even in the joys which they propose to themselves, that they must abhor the tools they work with, and loathe the means which they employ for their own ends. If Lieberg, at that moment, had given way to his own inclination, he would have driven the youth, with contempt and hatred, into the street. But he suffered him to depart quietly, saying—"Do not fail;" and William Barham proceeded on his way.

Exactly at the hour appointed he was at Lieberg's door again, and was instantly admitted to his dressing-room. The splendour and the luxury of everything that he beheld, the beautiful arrangement, the exquisite taste, struck him so much, that for a moment he did not speak, gazing round at all the richly-chased silver implements, the china, the glass, and the steel-work, with which the dressing-table was covered, and thinking that his sister would be a very happy girl, if, on any terms, she was permitted to live in the midst of such magnificence as that. And yet William Barham had been taught good principles; had heard, during his early youth, moral and religious doctrines from the lips of his mother; and, until his father's

health had failed entirely, had daily received instruction from him. But there are some minds which seem incapable of imbibing any clear and definite notion of right and wrong. They can recollect that they have been told one thing is good, and another thing is evil, and perfectly distinguish between the two, but without feeling in their hearts, even in the slightest degree, the excellence of the one and the hatefulness of the other. They are like that arid soil, which will produce abundance of weeds, but in which any good shrub withers as soon as it is planted.

Such was very much the case with William Barham; but there was another cause which had tended also to make him what he was, and which must be clearly pointed out. His father, though an excellent man and a sincere Christian, was fond of indulging in speculative opinions—not of embracing, but of discussing them—the most dangerous practice in the world before young people, for if they do not absolutely adopt the opinion that is wrong, they learn not to be quite sure that any opinion is right. The mind of Helen herself might have been affected by this fault on the part of their father, but she had two safeguards—a pure, high-spirited heart, and the memory of her mother's counsels, she

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having been somewhat older than her brother, and more capable of receiving principles than he was, at the time of that mother's death.

The tidings which William Barham brought were fuller than Lieberg had expected. The appearance of the servant and of the ladies was detailed with great accuracy, and even the crest upon the servant's button was known; but when Lieberg sent his valet to bring him a book that he named, in which the crests of all the principal families of England were displayed, he found that several would answer the description, which, as may easily be supposed, had not been given with true heraldic accuracy. William Barham seemed at his wits' end, when he found that this was the case; but Lieberg, whatever might be the strength of his passions, was not one of those who give them vent at every trifling obstacle. On the contrary, like the great propelling power of the present day, they were kept pent up within the iron of his bosom, but to carry him on with the fiercer vehemence to the end desired; and on this occasion he only laughed, saying—"We shall arrive at it—do not be afraid. Combining the crest with the colour of the livery, and then applying the description of the man himself and the ladies, to

discriminate among the various branches of the family, we shall find out the facts. I will put it in the hands of an Argus this very night, who will ferret out the whole matter ere eight-and-forty hours be over. Difficulties, my young friend, to a man of a firm mind, and obstacles in his path, of whatever nature they may be, only afford him stronger inducements to follow his course, and render his pursuit a passion. I remember a man who was told that he could never throw the same combinations four times running with the dice, and he sat for three months in the same room till he had done it. That man was fit to struggle for an empire. I have seldom suffered myself to seek anything very eagerly; but I never yet was baffled when I did. And now go home, and keep yourself as quiet as may be. Have no communication of any kind with the men that you know in London, and confide no secrets to the women. Always be at your own house, so that I may find you from nine in the morning till night-fall; the rest of the four-and-twenty hours is your own."

CHAPTER IV.

Two days elapsed, and on the third morning Lady Malcolm was sitting in her drawing-room alone, when the servant threw open the door, and announced "Colonel Lieberg." Her visitor upon the present occasion was personally known to her, so far as a mere bow went, when they met in society. But this was the first time that he had ever presented himself at her house; and Lady Malcolm, therefore, as she well might, looked somewhat surprised when she received him. Her demeanour, however, was perfectly courteous, though somewhat distant withal, and after begging him to be seated, she enquired what fortunate circumstance procured her the honour of his visit.

"I beg your ladyship's pardon," said Lieberg,

"for intruding upon you, especially at this hour of the morning; but, in truth, though I asked for you—thinking it would be more proper so to do—my visit is intended for a young lady, who is, I find, under your kind care and protection, and to whom I have some intelligence to communicate, which may, perhaps, give her pleasure."

Lady Malcolm, however, had lived long enough in the great world to have the faculty of misunderstanding, when she thought proper; and she therefore replied—"I am really very sorry, Count, but Miss Carr is out, and probably will not return till the evening."

"Your ladyship is under a mistake," replied Lieberg; "my visit was not intended for the lady you mention, but for Miss Barham, who, her brother informs me, is residing at your house."

"He is quite in error," replied Lady Malcolm; "Miss Barham did, indeed, do me the favour of passing a few days with me, but she left me yesterday morning."

Lieberg's cheek grew hot; and though he still maintained the appearance of the utmost suavity, there was a certain degree of sharpness in his tone, which shewed how mortified and disappointed he was.

"Then, of course," he said, "your ladyship can favour me with her address."

"No, indeed," replied Lady Malcolm, "I cannot. All I can tell you is, that she is gone into the country."

"May I humbly enquire," rejoined Lieberg, "whether your difficulty, in regard to telling me her address, is voluntary, or from ignorance of where she is?—I beg pardon," he added, in a softer tone, "if I am asking anything extraordinary; but as I have matters of importance to communicate to Miss Barham, it is very necessary that I should learn her address by some means, in order to write to her speedily."

"To answer you candidly, Count Lieberg," replied Lady Malcolm, "and as you put the question so distinctly, I must acknowledge that I do not give you the information you wish for, partly because I have not the exact address, and partly because Miss Barham requested me not to say where she is gone to any one."

"But I should certainly think she would make an exception in my favour," said Lieberg, earnestly, "considering that business of the greatest importance, affecting her brother in the highest degree, is left entirely in my hands. I say, therefore, Lady Malcolm," he added, as

that lady remained perfectly silent—"I say, therefore, that I should think she must have made an exception in my favour."

"She did not," answered Lady Malcolm, drily; "she never hinted at any exception at all; and such being the case, I cannot take upon myself to make one."

"Really, this is very extraordinary," exclaimed Lieberg; "and allow me to say, very mortifying also. Nor can I think that Miss Barham will be at all obliged to those who prevent her from receiving intelligence which it is necessary she should be made acquainted with directly."

"Indeed," said Lady Malcolm, "I feel it to be a very painful and disagreeable position; but you must see clearly, my dear Count, that I have only one course to pursue."

"No, indeed," replied Lieberg, "I cannot say that I agree with you. I cannot but think that, under present circumstances,, and considering my character and station in life, you might, without hesitation or apprehension of the consequences, make that exception in my favour which I am perfectly certain Miss Barham would have done had she thought of it."

"Ay," replied Lady Malcolm, with a sly smile, "but you men are so bold and resolute,

Count Lieberg, and I am but a poor timid woman, always afraid of doing wrong. You must forgive me, indeed, if I do not act as you wish; and besides, as I say, I have not got her exact address. She is to write to me in a few days, and then if she tells me to give you her address, I can send it. If not, I will write to her, and ask. This is all I can do."

The tone in which she spoke was firm and determined; and Lieberg, seeing that it was vain to press the matter further, made a virtue of necessity, saying—"Well, my dear Lady Malcolm, you judge for the best, I am sure; but believe me it may cause great inconvenience, especially as I myself much want to go out of town. What a beautiful little picture that is! That must be a Correggio!"

"It is generally esteemed so," replied Lady Malcolm. And Lieberg, before he took his leave, examined the various pictures which the room contained, praising several with that degree of discrimination which took from his commendation every appearance of flattery to the taste of the lady who had selected the paintings, though in reality he was skilfully smoothing down all the feelings of irritation which he feared his own irritation might have produced.

He succeeded so far as to make Lady Malcolm say to herself, after he left her, "Well, he is a very pleasant person, certainly.—But Morley is right," she added, "I would not trust him in matters such as this."

Whatever were Lady Malcolm's motives, the story which she had told Count Lieberg was perfectly true. Miss Barham had left her on the preceding day, and had gone down into the country. Juliet Carr, as she had promised when Morley first mentioned the situation of his poor protégée, had written at once to her father, asking if he would receive Helen as her companion and friend, when she herself came down, and hinting at those pecuniary arrangements which she knew would have weight with her somewhat too covetous parent.

To her surprise, however, she had received a letter by return of post, making no reference whatsoever to money matters, but "begging Juliet to ask only one question of her fair companion—namely, whether she was or was not the daughter of the Rev. Mr. Barham, the curate of Elmes, in Cumberland, and if both her father and mother were dead. If so, he said, he would have the greatest pleasure in receiving her, as he had been an intimate acquaintance of her

grandfather, and done what he could to prevent him from spending his fine property. He added, moreover, that if from the circumstances at which Juliet had hinted, it was more pleasant for Miss Barham to come down at once, without waiting for his daughter, he begged she would do so, and remain as long as she liked, when he would treat her in every respect as his child."

The whole letter was so unlike her father, that unless Juliet had seen the handwriting she could scarcely have believed it was his composition. That fact, however, was not to be doubted, and she accordingly shewed the epistle to Helen, who immediately replied that she was the daughter of the Mr. Barham mentioned, and she had some faint idea of having heard him once or twice speak of Mr. Carr. Juliet then proposed to write back to her father and inform him that, such being the case, Helen would accompany her to Yelverly in a fortnight. But Helen laid her fair hand upon her companion's arm, and gazing earnestly in her face, replied, "I would rather go at once, if possible."

"But why so, dear Helen," said Juliet. "Lady Malcolm wishes you to stay, and go with us to some watering-place for a time, and Morley has promised——"

"I would rather go at once," said Helen, with that sad shake of the head which speaks that the heart is faint and weary within us, —"I would rather go at once, dear Juliet— there is much that I would willingly avoid here, in London."

Juliet understood her in a moment, and opposed her no farther; and it was settled, at Helen's own desire, that she and her maid should proceed part of the way to Yelverly on the following morning. This plan was put in execution, and Helen herself seemed more than ever anxious to fly from the scenes that surrounded her. She was to visit for one day, as she went, the house of the friend to whom she had previously written, and whose prolonged silence she did not understand; after which, she was to go on to the house of Juliet's father, and to write immediately on her arrival. Thus, Lady Malcolm could safely say that she did not absolutely know where she was, though Juliet Carr could not have done so with as much sincerity had she been present, for Helen left the address of the friend she was about to visit with her.

We will not enquire into the feelings of Lieberg as he returned to his own home, suffice it

that he immediately sent for the youth, William Barham, with whom he held a long conference. At the end of their disquisition of ways and means, he despatched the lad to seek for Morley Ernstein in Berkeley Square, but that gentleman was not at home, and Lieberg himself, in riding through the park a few hours afterwards, met him walking with Lady Malcolm and a young lady, whose dazzling beauty of face and symmetry of form at once let Lieberg into the secret of a part, at least, of his friend's conduct. "Ha, this is good!" he said to himself, as he rode on after bowing to Lady Malcolm, and nodding familiarly to Morley. "This is good! However, Sir Morley, you shall not frustrate me."

Lieberg did not attempt to stop; nor appear to take any further notice of Juliet Carr; and Morley walked on by her side with very little restraint upon their feelings from the presence of Lady Malcolm. Whatever restraint did exist was, perhaps, not altogether unpleasant. It is strange to say, that the fact of being prevented from doing what we could wish to do, can ever be agreeable; and yet, though the lover may long to be altogether alone with her he loves, there is a sweet excitement in expressing all the warm and glowing feelings in the heart, by sha-

dowy figures, half veiling, half exposing, the thoughts and the sensations that we should have told openly had there not been an indifferent ear to listen.

Good Lady Malcolm, indeed, was by no means indifferent; and though her presence, as I have said, was some restraint, yet that restraint was too small ever to be painful. The marriage of Morley Ernstein and of Juliet Carr, was a thing that she had long set her heart upon; and that they would fall in love with each other as soon as they met, was one of those facts which she had predetermined, with that peculiar sort of vaticination which many elderly ladies experience in regard to affairs of the heart. When they did meet, then, and did fall in love with each other, she received it more as a compliment to her prophetical powers than anything else; and, well pleased with them and herself, she left them to settle the rest as much to their own satisfaction as possible.

Having used the words, "when they did meet, and did fall in love with each other," I must dwell for a minute or two upon the process of that act, as, in the hurry of tale-telling, I could not pause upon it sufficiently to explain some part of the mystery at the exact period

when it might be most proper to do so. I have shown, indeed, how it took place with Morley Ernstein, that in his case it was, in fact, *love at first sight*—a thing much more common, by the way, with eager and impetuous hearts and quick imaginations, than is generally supposed. It was, literally, love at first sight; for though there might be some vague boyish impressions of what he had loved and liked in childhood still remaining undefined in his mind, and making his heart spring to Juliet Carr as soon as he saw her, yet they were too indefinite to be taken into the account; and it was, simply and truly, admiration of her dazzling beauty, and the translation of that loveliness into a guarantee, under the hand of nature, that the heart, and mind, and spirit within were of the brightest kind, which made Morley Ernstein love Juliet Carr from the first moment he beheld her.

With her, the matter was very different. Woman's love is nursed with more visionary food than man's; and, in our cold climate at least, is of slower but more solid growth than his. Circumscribed in her sphere of action, even from her childhood, her feelings and her thoughts are more concentrated within her own bosom, and fix more firmly upon the great mas-

ter topic of her whole existence—love. Juliet, the reader has remarked, had recollected the early days she had passed with Morley Ernstein, better than he had done. The reason was, that she was a woman; and from a very early period, all the affections are matters of more importance to a woman than a man. She had recollected those early days, not only as a passing dream, but as a definite existence; there was scarcely a sport or a pastime which they had enjoyed together, that she could not call up before the eye of memory. The voice of Morley Ernstein, in all the soft tones of boyish attachment, had often rung in her ears as she grew towards womanhood. His young, bright face often presented itself in her waking and her sleeping hours, and sometimes she would try to picture the changes that must have come over him, and would ask herself, "What the boy would be, now he was become a man!"

Her annual visit to Lady Malcolm too—her father allowed her to make an annual visit—called Morley frequently back to her mind, for that good friend would often talk of him in the manner which the little scheme she had established, in her own mind, suggested; and by one means or another, Juliet's imagination was

supplied with plenty of food for nursing up young affection into full-grown love. Thus was it, then, that the germ of the future passion went on in her heart; so that when she saw Morley Ernstein again under the wall of his own park, it was with no slight emotion that she recognised the companion of her early days; that she beheld him far surpassing, in personal appearance, all which she had herself anticipated; that she heard the tones of the same voice, which still echoed in her ear from the pleasant places of her childhood, and that she beheld—although it was evident that he did not know her—his eyes filled with admiration, and with the promise of love. She dreamt upon that meeting for many a long day, and dreamt joyfully, though the interview itself had been mingled with some pain, in consequence of her father's harsh and rude repulse of Morley's apology for the accident which had occurred.

And now what were her feelings? Reader, she had given herself entirely to the passion that had taken its place in her heart. Everything which she had seen of Morley Ernstein was so noble, so generous, so kind, that reason confirmed all that the voice of love prompted, and told her that she might well, and without hesitation,

acknowledge her choice in the eyes of all the world. She felt that the glow of pride would mingle with the blush of modesty on her cheek, as she avowed her affection for one so well worthy of attachment, and she could not see in the whole range of probability, one objection that any one could urge against her union with him whom she had chosen. The eye of avarice itself, greedy as it is, might be dazzled with the splendour of his fortune. His attainments, his character, his connexions, were all high, and such as might well satisfy a far nobler race than hers. He was master, too, of himself, and of his own choice, so that there did not appear the slightest chance of any obstacle to their union.

Indeed, between Morley Ernstein and Juliet Carr, difficulties were never thought of—objections were never anticipated. Morley had never asked her to wed him. He had told her of his love ; he had painted it with all the fire and eagerness that he felt ; he had seen that he was loved in return, and, not satisfied with that, he had drawn from her, by questions, and entreaties, and all the arts of passion, an acknowledgment that it was so. More than one day had passed in all the pleasant visions of the future, in all the words, and looks, and caresses

which form that bright and rapturous dream in which the hours of young affection fleet by. Rarely, very rarely, do lovers think much of difficulties, and certainly if there ever was a case where it seemed needless to do so, it was that of Morley Ernstein and Juliet Carr. While they were together—and it must be admitted that they were so during the greater part of each day—the minutes flew by like lightning; and had their whole lives been destined to pass in the same manner, life and death would have seemed but two points with an instant of joy between them.

There were times, however, when the ordinary proprieties of society, or the particular arrangements of Lady Malcolm, kept them apart, and in those hours Lieberg was almost always with Morley Ernstein. Now, let not the reader suppose that Morley was very foolish, or very weak, for putting any trust in one who was so little trustworthy, or in associating with a man, whose views, thoughts, and principles, were so different from his own. The reader, it is true, knows what were Lieberg's views, thoughts, and principles. For the eyes of the world we have drawn back the veil, and exposed his heart; but such was not the case with Morley Ernstein. No hand

had laid bare for him the objects and the views of his travelling companion—no one had shewn him Lieberg's dealings with William Barham—no one had told the purposes he nourished against Helen with but the more eagerness and determination from the opposition that he had met with. On all these points Morley was in the dark. He only knew Lieberg as the most fascinating person that he had ever met with; as a man full of talent, information, and taste; as one who possessed that sort of candour, which, far from concealing opinions when opposed either to the views and prejudices of others, or to the general feelings of society, rather exaggerates and aggravates them, and makes them appear worse than they really are. He knew him, besides, as one capable of doing generous actions, and at the same time denying all merit in performing them; as one, who was even at that moment sacrificing a large sum, rather than proceed to the destruction of a fellow-creature; as one who had saved his own life, and who had attended him through a long and painful sickness with the care and tenderness of a brother.

Such was the light in which Morley had alone a right to regard Count Lieberg, although his friend's openly-avowed principles, in regard to

some points of morality, might well cause him to avoid as far as possible placing the fate of a young and lovely being, like Helen Barham, in any degree at his disposal. Nor did the least point appear in Lieberg's present conduct, which could excite Morley's suspicions. He entered warmly into his views for hastening the departure of William Barham from England; he drove with Morley down to the docks, for the purpose of seeking a vessel to bear the youth to a foreign land. He aided eagerly in obtaining the promise of a small place of considerable labour, but no great trust, for Helen's brother, and in every respect he seemed almost to have forgotten herself. So at least it appeared, though, indeed, if there was anything which should have excited Morley's suspicion, it was the fact of Lieberg's total silence in regard to an object which had once seemed to interest him so deeply. But Morley was not of a suspicious nature, and he judged that Lieberg, a man of the world, and a man of pleasure, had looked upon poor Helen Barham as a beautiful picture, which he had seen and perhaps desired, but had forgotten very soon. Thus he was well pleased to enjoy Lieberg's society, whenever he was obliged to be absent from Juliet Carr. Yet, if the truth must

be told, Morley did feel that his companion's conversation was not calculated to improve him, though it might be to instruct and to amuse. Nevertheless he did not bring the conviction home to his own heart so far as to prevent him from accompanying Lieberg to various places of entertainment, and enjoying the comments of his friend fully as much as that which he went to see or to hear.

Once, and only once, during their rambles about London, Lieberg jested with him slightly upon the subject of Juliet Carr, and claimed a right to be present at the marriage, saying—

"Pray tell the fair lady, Morley, that I pulled you out of the water just in time to fulfil your country's vulgar proverb, about the propensity to hanging counteracting the risk of a watery death."

"Oh, you shall be present," replied Morley, gaily, "but recollect, Lieberg, you have been wrong once in regard to your calculation of my proceedings, and you may be mistaken, even now."

Lieberg looked at him with a quiet smile, but made no reply, and the conversation dropped there. As usually happens in London, two or three gay *fêtes* took place, as if to close the

season brilliantly and, whenever it was possible, Lieberg induced his young friend to go to these parties, and introduced him to a number of the persons present. Although, by this time, all Morley's plans and purposes, in regard to the study of society, had been burnt up, like old acts of parliament, in the fire of passion, he was not sorry to see such scenes, and to know such people. But if Lieberg thought that Morley was likely to plunge into the vortex of dissipated life, to have his attention distracted, and his eyes blinded, by the gay scenes and bright objects around him, so as to forget his purposes in regard to Helen Barham, and to leave her to her fate, even for a short period, Lieberg was mistaken.

Had Morley not known Juliet Carr, he might have drunk of the cup of pleasure to intoxication; for there were many beautiful, and sparkling, and brilliant, who were right willing to lead him into paths more flowery than safe, and to assail him on all sides, with arms very difficult for a young man to resist. But Morley was defended now with that highest and noblest of armour, love for a pure and beautiful being. His life, in short, was in Juliet Carr, and all the rest around him was but a pageant or a dream.

CHAPTER V.

"TAKE care you're not done, Bill—that's all I say!" was the exclamation of the good-looking, powerful fellow, who has once already been placed before the reader's eyes, under the name of Harry Martin, and who now sat with Helen's brother in the house she had inhabited. "If he gets you on board ship, you mayn't get out again, I take it; but you know your own business best. I don't like the job, I can tell you. I think you're all wrong, my lad, and you'll find it out some day.—Come, pass us another glass, and I'll be jogging.—If I were you, I would stick to my sister; she's a very good girl, I hear; and hang me, Bill, its very well talking, but a good girl's a good girl, you know, and a bad one's a bad one—there's

no mistake. You that are born a gentleman, too, I should have thought you'd something more of it in you. Why didn't ye fly at the fellow's throat when he shewed you the paper, and tear it all to pieces in a minute?"

"I couldn't," said William Barham, who had been gazing down upon the floor, with a look half sullen, half ashamed; "there was a table between us, and I couldn't get at it."

"If you could get hold of that," said Harry Martin, "the job would be at an end, you know; you could do what you pleased. Can't you make him shew it you again?"

The boy shook his head. "It wont do, Harry," he said; "he keeps it in a little pocket-book, with some other things; and I would have tried to get it out of his pocket quietly, as Simes showed me how one day, but you see it's an inside pocket, and I can't get at it."

"Why, for that matter, one could cut his pocket off," said Harry Martin; "and I shouldn't care if I had a hand in it; but we must have two or three, and unless there was a good deal of tin to be had besides, the men would not like to risk a trip to Botany, just to get that note of yours. However, I'll think over it, and talk with some other fellows about it, and perhaps

we shall bring the thing right after all. I'll take one more glass, and then I'll go."

William Barham thought for a moment or two, and then said, "I'll tell you what, Harry, when we find out where Helen is, he's sure to go down into the country after her. Don't you think that one could do something, as he goes? He has always lots of money about him, and that gold snuff box which there was a piece of work about once with Bill Jones, you know; and if he goes into the country for any time, his dressing-case is worth a cool couple of hundred, just to make soup of, as you call it. It's all gold and silver together."

"What! a touch of the highway, as men used to have long ago?" said Harry Martin. "But that's not so easy done now, my boy. We have changed all that—trade has fallen off sadly too. I wish those days would come again, for there's scarce a man of us keeps a horse now."

"Why, you've got your horse and gig, Harry," said the youth.

"Ay, but one can't stop a gentleman on the road with a horse and gig."

"Very true," answered William Barham; "but if he were to go down into the country, you could go after him, and make a smash of it."

The man with whom he was talking, laughed, but seemed to think the idea not a bad one. "We can't do it for nothing, Bill," he said; "though if he puts up in a place where there's something to be got, and the thing's easy, I shouldn't mind undertaking it, for your sake, though I am not a cracksman, myself—especially if it's a good way down in the country, for you see, there's not so much chance of being pulled up for it. We could have the gig waiting, and after the job was done, get in and drive thirty miles or so, and then take the coach. All I can say is, if you choose to cut this business about your sister entirely, and want really to get out of the fellow's power, I'll help you as far as I can; so look out, there's a good boy, and let me know; for hang me, if I like to see a poor girl bought and sold, like a sheep in Smithfield!—And now, good night, Bill. I would fain see you a free man again, for now you're no better than a nigger-slave in the West Indies."

Thus saying, he left him, and I will not pause to investigate and lay bare all the curious combinations in the bosom of Harry Martin, which produced his strange and anomalous notions of honour and dishonour, honesty and dishonesty. It would be a very difficult task in his case,

and perhaps if we knew all, it would not be much less so in the case of many men of far higher reputation—for too, too often, in this good world, do we see the frauds to which they are accustomed, the dishonest—ay, and criminal acts, which suit their purposes and conveniences, placed in as strange contrast with better things in the life of high and distinguished persons, "all honourable men," as the habit of plundering was, with his notions in regard to Helen Barham, in the breast of Henry Martin. The man who takes a solemn vow at the altar, in the presence of his God, and breaks it ere three months are over, would cut the throat of his dearest friend, if he called him a liar; and yet, what is he? The politician, who, on the hustings, or on the table, excites the passions of the people, vows that he is seeking their own interests solely, when his object is place, or power, or station; or he, who in his canvass promises all sorts of things that he never can, and never will perform, what is he but a hypocrite? and yet he would grin at you like a dog if you gave him his right name. I could go on for an hour to shew how we felons of high station contrive to render our notions of honour quite as compatible

with crime and dishonour, of the basest sort, as were the plundering habits of William Barham's companion, with his indignation at the brother's carelessness of the sister's honour.

However, as I have said, I must not pause upon such things, for I fear very much, with the slow rate at which my story proceeds, I may be obliged to infringe the boundary which the customs of the present day ascribe to the teller of a tale. Nor will I delay the reader with all that took place between Lieberg and William Barham, previous to the embarkation of the latter in the river Thames, for a long and distant voyage. The whole business was conducted with the knowledge, and under the eye, of Morley Ernstein. Money was furnished to him for all necessary expenses, and Mr. Hamilton, who was now slowly recovering, promised his interest, at Morley's solicitation, to obtain advancement for the young man in the distant land to which he was going, if his conduct during a couple of years justified the belief that he would act honourably for the future. Before he embarked, he wrote a letter to Helen, and gave it into Morley's hands to put upon it the right address. Morley did so, and forwarded it himself, but no answer had been

received at the time the ship dropped down the river.

Such were the principal events connected with the fate of William Barham which took place in London ; but I must now suddenly change the scene, and beseech the reader to accompany me to a distant spot, and take up his abode for a short space in a small room—for the inn had no other but small rooms—in a house known by the distinctive appellation of "The Sandown Castle," in the small town of Deal.

It was night, and the wind had been blowing freshly from the westward during the whole day; but as the sun went down it increased to a gale, varying somewhat to the southward, with an unpromising blackness about the sky in that quarter, mingling with the faint red of evening, in the west and north. It was altogether as ominous and unpleasant a night to commence a long voyage upon, as any one could wish to see; and nobody whose destiny was not very well assured, would have chosen the neighbourhood of the Goodwin Sands for his night's lodging on the deep. Although the wind had got to the south, as I have said, the night was one of those which are more generally met with in this favoured climate than any other

—that is to say, cold, raw, and damp, in the very midst of the summer, giving us back all our recollections of December in the heart of July.

The room of which I have spoken in the little inn, had been made as comfortable as possible, under existing circumstances. The table had been well rubbed, to take out the marks of tumblers, imprinted in rum-and-water; the windows had been opened to "air the room"—a proceeding which, to say the truth, was not a little required, as a dull and heavy atmosphere of tobacco-smoke and mixed spirits reigned within, and seemed very ill-disposed to go out, either at door or window, in that cold and boisterous night. There was a small fire, too, in the grate, and once or twice, as the evening drew in and night fell heavy over the world, a very genteel-looking personage, with a foreign countenance, and a grave, sedate air, entered the room, looked about him to see that everything was right, put this thing and that thing in order, smoothing down a great coat, that hung over the back of a chair, stirring the fire, arranging the furniture, and doing all those little acts which give notice that some personage is expected, for whom everything must be prepared in the nicest manner.

At length, he shut the windows and lighted

the candles, and in about ten minutes after, a gentleman, dressed in the very height of fashion, with a large blue military cloak, of the finest cloth, hanging from his shoulders, entered the room, and advancing to the fire, gazed into it for a minute or two in silence. The other personage whom we have mentioned, stood at a respectful distance, without saying a single word, till at length his master, for so it was, turned round and gave him his hat and wet cloak, saying, "Here, Martini, take these, and then go down to the beach. It is a terrible night, and I am uneasy about the ship—one can see the surf running upon the sands quite plain. There was a vessel too, apparently coming into the Downs, but I could make nothing of it myself, and the jargon of these pilots I do not pretend to understand. I suppose the boy will come ashore directly, of course."

"If he can, sir," replied the man, with a strong foreign accent; "but I should not like to trust myself, I know, in an open boat, on such a night as this."

"There are several boats out," said Lieberg, for it was our friend who spoke; and then making a sign for the man to leave him, he sat till

nearly eleven o'clock at night in that worst of all states of idleness, the idleness of a strange inn, which is the next thing to solitary confinement. Lieberg, on most occasions, had plenty of means of employing and amusing himself, but at the present moment his mind was evidently not at ease. He gazed during the greater part of the evening into the fire, and one might have supposed that it was the thought of being baffled in his pursuit, by the destruction of the ship which bore William Barham, that troubled him, had not a word or two escaped from his lips towards the end of the period we have mentioned, which shewed that, in reality, some better feelings were mingled with his emotions, and that it was about the youth himself, and the risk he ran for the time, he was anxious. The words indeed, dear reader, to which I allude, were all harsh, and, apparently, unfeeling; but still they shewed that Lieberg was occupied rather with the boy's fate than with his own plans and purposes.

"Curse him!" he said, rising from his chair, towards eleven o'clock—"he may as well die that way as any other. He would be hanged, that's certain, sooner or later, if he escaped the water. So it is as well if he be drowned after

all. There is no reason for my making myself uneasy about him. It might be as well, indeed, if he had some other business in hand when called upon to join the world of spirits; but I dare say, let him live as long as a patriarch, he would be engaged in some rascality at the day of his death, and as well this as anything else; so good bye to him!"

Thus saying, Lieberg rang the bell and ordered supper to be brought, of which, when it did appear, he partook moderately, and then retired to bed, his valet having by that time returned without any tidings whatsoever of William Barham, or the ship that bore him. If the truth must be told, however, Lieberg did not sleep much, for while he was undressing, a dull, distant peal came from the sea, loud, but heavy.

"'Tis some ship firing for a pilot, sir," said his valet.

Lieberg took out his watch and listened; ere the minute was quite done, there came the roar of another gun, and then another, and another. For near an hour the same sounds went on, when all became still, except the rushing of the wind, and the heavy, thunder-like fall of the sea upon the beach. Stoicism may do its utmost, but the

human heart generally finds a time to speak, and Lieberg was so evidently uneasy, that his *valet de chambre*—who had about as much feeling as that race of created beings generally have, and no more—evidently saw that his master was very much more moved than was usually the case with him, and went to bed, wondering what could be the occasion thereof—that is to say, not asking himself exactly what was the object of Lieberg's emotion, but what possibly could induce him to give way to any emotion at all.

Perceiving, however, that such was the case, and wishing, as all well-disposed *valets de chambre* are expected to do, to set his master's mind at ease, his tap was heard at Lieberg's door towards six o'clock on the following morning, and his voice exclaimed—"He is arrived, sir! The ship has gone to pieces, but all the crew are saved."

Lieberg instantly started up, threw on his brocaded dressing-gown, and opened the door. The man, who was standing there, pointed to the sitting-room, which was on the opposite side of the passage, and his master instantly crossed over and entered the room.

Certainly never on earth did a more disconsolate object present itself to the eyes of man, than

that which was offered to Lieberg's sight by the unfortunate William Barham. He was seated on a chair by the fire—which had just been relighted and had not well burnt up—without a coat or waistcoat; his long, silky, light hair drenched with water, and hanging upon his cheeks and neck; his countenance, previously pallid with licentiousness and habits of vice, now ten times paler than ever, and purplish at the extremes, with the cold and terror he had undergone; his eyes languid, his teeth chattering, and his whole limbs trembling, while a bad cut upon his forehead, received in getting into one of the boats, made him look still more miserable, and a stain or two of blood oozing through the breast of his shirt, shewed that he must have received some other blow upon the chest.

Lieberg was truly moved by what he saw, and exerted himself energetically to comfort and assist the unhappy young man. "Get a bed ready, and have it warmed, immediately!" he exclaimed, addressing a drowsy chambermaid, who was trying, by various pokes and thumps, to irritate the cold-hearted coals, in the grate, into some degree of warmth. "You, Martini, bring him some Madeira as quick as possible, while I get him some dry clothes."

The girl proceeded as slowly as possible, according to the usual custom of such personages; but Martini sprang rapidly to obey his master's orders, and Lieberg himself soon procured all that was necessary for arraying the unfortunate youth in dry clothing, and bringing some degree of warmth back into his chilled and exhausted frame. A surgeon also was sent for, and, as soon as possible, William Barham was placed in a warm bed, and received such treatment as the man of art thought necessary in the existing circumstances.

While this was taking place he said very little himself, only answering in a monosyllable; and Lieberg asked but few questions for the time. All that he thus learnt was, that the vessel had got well out of the mouth of the Thames, and was making the best of her way towards her destination, notwithstanding the Captain's previous intimation that he would touch at Deal, when the change of wind had forced him to try for an anchorage in the Downs, and, by some mismanagement towards nightfall, the ship, instead of getting into a place of security, had been driven upon the Goodwins, and become a complete wreck. Though the gallant boatmen of Deal had done all in their power, it had proved utterly impossible to save any one from the wreck

before daybreak. But then, with great difficulty, and at the imminent risk of their own lives, the hovellers, as they are called, had contrived to bring off the whole of the crew, except one or two, who had been swept from the wreck during the night. Further particulars were obtained by Lieberg in the course of the day; and with the spirit of liberality which he always shewed, he contributed largely to assist the unfortunate persons who had lost the whole of their stores in the ship, and also to reward the brave fellows who had saved their lives.

Lieberg thus occupied himself during the day, and at night returned to the inn, where his servant met him at the foot of the little stairs, and communicated to him two pieces of intelligence, the latter of which seemed to affect him the most.

"He is up, sir," said the man in a low tone; "and in the sitting-room; and he has received a letter from the post-office, addressed to William Barham, Esq., in the ship 'Mary Anne.'"

"In what sort of hand?" demanded Lieberg, eagerly. "Did you see the post-mark?"

"The hand was a very good one, sir," replied the valet. "The post-mark was Doncaster."

Lieberg started, and turned red. "Morley Ernstein's post-town!" he exclaimed. "But nonsense!" he continued, after pausing for a moment, "he is still lingering on in London. The thing cannot be. He must have got somebody to receive her in the neighbourhood;" and with some doubts still upon his mind, he mounted the staircase and entered the room, where William Barham was seated over the fire, though by this time the weather had become sultry to the feelings of every one else.

"How hot the room is!" exclaimed Lieberg, as he entered. "Tell the people to serve dinner as soon as possible.—Well, William, how do you feel now?"

"Very much bruised, and very cold," replied the youth, sullenly.

"I hear you have had a letter from your sister," said Lieberg, in a quiet, easy tone. "Pray where is she now?"

The man Martini was in the room; and it is probable that Lieberg calculated upon the youth giving him an answer at once. But William Barham still sat over the fire, without looking up, and replied—"We'll talk about that by-and-by."

"Leave the room, Martini," said Lieberg,

adding, as soon as he was obeyed—"Well, William, now, where is your sister?"

The youth rose up from before the fire, and stood opposite to Lieberg, pale, ghastly, and haggard, replying, boldly—"I do not mean to say I do not know where my sister is, for I do, and I know too that you have got me in your power; but before I tell you any more, or help you any farther, I will have you promise me to settle something upon her, so that she may never want."

Lieberg gazed at him for a moment, with a dark, considering look, not unmixed with contempt, and he then replied—"Make your mind easy, she shall never want. Now answer my question, and quickly, for I do not love being trifled with."

The worm he trod upon turned against him, and the youth replied—"I shall not tell you anything more, or help you any farther, unless you give me some better assurance than that. I'll tell you what, Count; last night in the storm, when I was clinging to the wreck, I thought I heard Helen's voice in the wind, and this morning I have been thinking of her ever since I woke; and I have made up my mind sooner to die than to do anything farther, unless

you will give me something, under your hand, which will ensure that she shall never be walking about the streets in misery, as I have seen some poor girls do."

Lieberg frowned upon him darkly, with feelings that it may be best to explain. We can only do so in part, it is true, for there was one dark side of his character upon which we cannot throw light. Such explanation, however, as we can give, we will. There had been something in the beauty of Helen Barham—ay, in her innocence and somewhat wild simplicity — which had struck and captivated him much. Her talents, too, and tastes, were of a kind to attract him; and though he had beheld her but once, he had seen quite sufficient to show him that she was exactly the being for whom he had been long seeking, to be his companion, his paramour, the object of passion, the amusement of idle hours; to be sported with, conversed with, to be lapped in luxury, spoiled, petted, and perhaps loved, but to be dependent entirely upon his will—the slave of the Eastern harem, not the wife of a civilized land.

He saw all this in a moment, and had determined to obtain her: yet perhaps he might have been diverted from the pursuit by any small and

ordinary obstacle, which did not pique his vanity or excite his passions. The difficulties he had met with, however, had been the work of human beings; he had been thwarted and opposed by those who seemed inferior to himself; and every stumbling-block that he met with, every barrier in his way, made him but the more resolute to overleap them all, and to pursue his course with a degree of vehemence and passion, which mere love for Helen Barham could not have excited in the short space of time that he had known her.

Determined to win her, and thinking that no sacrifice would be too much for that object, he would not have hesitated, in the least, to make any provision for her that was in his power, had it not been dictated to him; but that her brother, who was bound hand and foot before him, chained to his will, as a sinner to the power of Satan—that he should turn and make conditions, excited the evil spirit that reigned in him to the very highest pitch, and made him reply, after gazing upon the youth darkly for a moment—"Very well—you would sooner die, would you? That is easy. I had better send for a constable;" and he put his hand towards the bell, adding, as he did so—

"You make your own choice, young man; but do not let any wild notions of romance enter into your head, and make you believe that you can frustrate me. You will only be hanged yourself, and make no change in your sister's fate, for I know that she is in the neighbourhood of Doncaster as well as you do. So now I shall give you into charge at once; then go down to see her, and return in time to bear testimony to your merits at the trial:" and he rang the bell.

The youth's resolution failed him; he gasped, as if he were half strangled, exclaiming—"For God's sake—for God's sake, spare me!" and thrust into Lieberg's hand—even as the landlord entered the room—the letter which he had received from Helen Barham.

Lieberg's lip curled, and grasping the letter tight, he turned round to the landlord, saying—"Is not the dinner ready? I ordered it at six precisely! What wine can you give me?" and he entered, in the calmest tone possible, into a discussion upon things to be eaten and drunk, which would not edify the reader to hear.

After he had done, and the landlord was dismissed, Lieberg walked with the letter to the window, read it attentively, took a note of one or two things on some tablets, and then returned it to William Barham.

"Mark one thing, my good young man," he said, "and recollect it well in your future dealings with me—I am not a man to be dictated to. Nothing was ever obtained from me by threat or opposition yet. What you required for your sister just now, and I would not grant, because you asked it in a high tone, I will now consent to, since you have yielded obedience, and will give you a promise under my hand of that which will always put your sister above need. Where is the paper I gave you when we were in London? I will add it to that."

The boy shook his head sadly, saying—"It is lost, with everything else that I had, in that ship. You must write it on another piece of paper."

"That I will do at once," said Lieberg, drawing a writing-desk to him. "Do not be cast down, my good youth, at your losses, I will soon repair them amply if we succeed. But come, here is the dinner, and you want some refreshment. I will write it afterwards. Sit down; what will you take—some soup, or some fish?"

The youth sat down to table with him, and Lieberg treated him with kindness. But the reader learned in the human heart need not be

told, that William Barham hated him as much for his after-condescension as he did for his previous tyranny.

Lieberg kept his word. After dinner he wrote a promise, which was quite as satisfactory to William Barham as such a promise could be: he provided him also with all that was necessary for his comfort, while weakness obliged him to remain in Deal, and gave him money to journey to London as soon as he had taken some repose, charging him strictly, however, to go to the house he had formerly inhabited, and keep himself out of sight of Sir Morley Ernstein. Lieberg himself set off early in the following morning for London, proposing to go down at once to Doncaster, in pursuit of Helen, but hoping to return successful ere many days were over.

Not wishing his proceedings to be particularly remarked, and fearing that he might meet some one in the coach who knew him, Lieberg had come down to Deal in his own carriage, and in it he returned; but scarcely was he gone, when William Barham demanded at what hour the coaches started, and in less than half an hour after he also was on his way to town, with feelings of hatred in his heart towards him who had just left him, which were not without their fruit in due time.

CHAPTER VI.

WEND back with me, dear reader, into that distant part of the country where this tale first began ; not exactly, indeed, to the same scene, but to a spot about three or four miles from Morley Court, which you have already heard of, under the name of Yelverly. The aspect of that place, and of the whole country round it, was so peculiar, that I should have wished to pause, and give some description of the house and grounds, even if I had not been impelled to do so by the necessity of the case. But there are things to come, which may render it requisite that the reader's eye should be able to call up, like a magistrate, each individual part of the scene before it, and examine it strictly as a witness in regard to the events that are

taking place. Oh, those silent witnesses!—those trees, those shrubs, those fields! those dark panels of the old oak chamber! those carved figures and antique busts of ancient heroes!—oh, those silent witnesses in every old domain! Could we but endow them with a voice, what tales might they tell of merry or sad scenes in the long past; of secret sins, and horrible treacheries; of human absurdity, folly, and vice; of crime, of agony, and of despair! How might they, with their quaint old legends, make the lips laugh, the bosom heave, and the eyes overflow!

The house of Yelverly was a curious old stone structure, of firm and solid masonry, on which few repairs had taken place, for few had been necessary, but which had been subjected to several alterations, as was evinced by apertures blocked up here and there, and by the lines of different coloured stone-work, which indicated that the tops of the windows, which were now square, had once displayed pointed, or Tudor arches. What the building had originally been I do not know, probably some dependence of a monastery or abbey, in the neighbourhood. It had never been large, though it now formed a roomy and convenient house for a small family. But, notwithstanding its antiquity, and the pic-

turesque taste of the architects of the age in which it was built, it had not one single pretension to beauty of any kind, sort, or description whatsoever. It was grey, and cold, and flat, with the windows apparently scattered over the face of it by accident, each having been put in, beyond all doubt, wherever it was found convenient; here, to light one room—there, to light another; at one point to clear up the obscurity of a staircase—at a second, to let the sun shine into a passage.

As if to disfigure the front more completely, a penthouse had been thrown out from one side, at the height of about ten feet from the ground, covering an eighth part of the building, and rendering the rooms thus sheltered dull and sunless enough. The principal door would have been as ugly as the rest of the house, had it not possessed an old-fashioned stone porch, with a seat on either side, which, by no means beautiful in itself, yet relieved the eye, in some degree, by breaking the flatness of the building.

Before the house, extended a long grass court, up which no carriage could drive, and which was separated from a cross road that run in front, by a wall about three feet high, surmounted by a row of tall, thin, iron railings.

The ornaments of the court were ten magnificent old yew trees, forming, as it were, a sort of avenue from the gate in the iron railing, up to the door of the house, the trees being ranged at equal distances on either side, and a small path, formed of dumpling-like stones placed edge-ways, running between them. On either side the court was flanked by a tall brick wall, and the only entrance for a carriage was down a narrow lane at the side, which led by some gates into a large paved court behind. It is true that Mr. Carr, having quarrelled with all the gentry in the neighbourhood, and not being particularly beloved by the great farmers, who had an idea that he was fond of fomenting disputes, was seldom troubled with the approach of curricle, or carriage, or one-horse chaise. But still that lane was necessary and useful to him, as he was himself a skilful and experienced agriculturist, though so avaricious, as often to injure himself by grudging a load of manure where it was really necessary.

The country round was of a very curious aspect. For more than a mile on either side, it displayed chiefly fine old grass-land, separated into fields of every size and shape by thick-set hedges, well kept, but totally without trees.

The scenery, though not at all mountainous, or even hilly, might be called hillocky, for it was so undulating, that if a field contained more than four acres, it was certain to have in it both a hill and a valley; and through several of the latter ran a clear trout-stream, giving great luxuriance to the grass, and rendering it the finest pasture ground in the world. There was an air, however, of bareness about the landscape, from the want of trees, which accorded well with the bald antiquity of the old house, and on a summer evening, when the sun was going down, and the slant beams peered over the green uplands, one might sit in that stone porch, and fancy oneself a yeoman of the olden time, so much did the ancient aspect of the whole scene sink into the heart.

It was on such a summer evening, then, that Old Carr, the miser—as he was called in the neighbourhood,—walked forth between those black yews with fair Helen Barham. Nature, who loves contrasts, and who places the bright red berries amidst the dark green leaves, might well be satisfied with the opposition of those two: Helen, as she came forward, the picture of youth and grace and wild simplicity; and Robert Carr, with age, and heaviness, and slow

computation in all his steps and looks. I have already described his personal appearance, and have only to add, in that respect, that he seemed to the eye much more aged when on foot than on horseback, as is very often the case. His hair was not white, indeed, but it was very thickly mingled with grey, and though he was not fat, yet, as I have said, he was heavy. His step was deliberate and weighty, and his face, which had certainly once been handsome, was marked with many lines, which one might have taken for the traces of strong passions, had it not been for the thoughtful, calculating expression of the countenance, which seemed utterly at variance with passion of any sort but one. The greed of gain was written there in characters easily read, though it also was of its particular kind. It was more the eagerness of the beast of prey, than the spirit of petty accumulation; nor was it alone the rapacity of the wolf, for the subtlety of the fox was there also.

The eyes were bent down upon the ground all the time he walked, but the right eyebrow was raised up and down, as the feelings, called forth by the conversation, produced any change upon his countenance, and always, while he was listening, his upper lip was raised on the opposite side, displaying a long, fang-like tooth,

with much of the look of a dog when one strives to take away a bone. He must have been a tall man and powerfully formed, though now very much broken; and it is said that he beat another attorney almost to death in the streets of York, for having foiled him in an unjust suit. The other prosecuted him, indeed, for an assault; but by some of the extraordinary loop-holes of the law, Robert Carr crept through the danger, and escaped unpunished.

He did not give his arm to Helen Barham as they walked, but held a thick staff in his right hand, with which he steadied his steps, and strove to give himself the appearance of youthful firmness. He had shewn to Helen Barham so much kindness and courtesy since her arrival, however, that she would have been very willing to pass over the want of any small attention, even had she perceived it, which certainly she did not; and, walking on beside him, with her bonnet loosely thrown on, her rich hair clustering round her beautiful face, a look of thoughtful sadness in her dark bright eyes, and a somewhat listless grace in all her movements, very different from the wild buoyancy of her step before she knew Morley Ernstein, she listened to the old lawyer's questions, and gave him true and

simple answers, with little or no reservation, for he did not touch upon any of those points where she might have felt some difficulty in framing her reply.

"And so," said old Carr, "your brother is seventeen years of age."

"Nearly eighteen," replied Helen; "his birthday is in December."

"A cold month," said the lawyer—"mine is in October. And so you left him in London?"

"Yes," replied Helen, "but he was very speedily to sail for the West Indies."

The old man started—"Sail for the West Indies!" he exclaimed. "Sail for the West Indies! That is very unfortunate. What could make him think of such a thing as that?—that is very unfortunate, indeed!"

"Perhaps not so much as you imagine," said Helen, colouring, and determined to meet the point at once, with the general truth, lest she should be cross-questioned in regard to the particulars. "My poor brother had got into very bad society, I am sorry to say, and some kind and generous friends have obtained for him a small post in one of those colonies."

"He must come back—he must come back!" said the old lawyer. "I was just going to bid

you invite him down here. Do you think he is gone? Are you sure he is sailed?"

"By this time he certainly is," replied Helen. "In your kind daughter's letter, which I received two or three days ago, she informed me of the day that he was to sail, and enclosed to me a letter from himself, confirming the same tidings, and bidding me write to him at Deal, as that would be the last opportunity of communicating with him ere his departure. I wrote yesterday, accordingly."

"That is very unlucky," said the old man, "and now the post is gone out. He must come back—he must come back!"

"Nay," answered Helen, somewhat surprised, and, to say the truth, thinking the old gentleman verging towards dotage. "It will be better for him, I believe, to stay where he is. You know that he has no means of gaining his bread in England, and there at least he has a provision."

"I know—I know," said the lawyer, impatiently. "You are all poor—you are all beggars—Juliet said so. But, I tell you, your brother must come back—he is heir to a large property unjustly withheld from him, and I will undertake to cause restitution. Why, I have got

all the papers myself! I did not know, till Juliet wrote, that your father had any children; and your father himself was a fool, and would not let me act for him; but would have suffered you both to live like beggars and die on a dunghill, out of a mere idle whim. But your brother will be wiser, and I will get back the estates for him, if he will give me—give me ten thousand pounds."

Helen smiled, and in gayer days she might have laughed, though many things that the lawyer had said had made her shrink as if he had put his hand upon a wound.

"Where is my brother to get ten thousand pounds, think you, Mr. Carr?" she said. "We are, as you said, if not quite beggars, very nearly so, and I think poor William would find it difficult to find ten thousand pence."

"I mean—I mean," cried Mr. Carr, "he shall give me ten thousand pounds when I have got the property for him. I will stand all the expenses in the meanwhile. Ten thousand pounds shall cover all, and he shall give me a bond to pay it when I have got back the property for him. I will be like the quack doctors—'no cure, no pay,' my dear Miss Barham. Ha, ha, ha!" and he laughed aloud. "Why the thing is as

easy as possible," he continued; "the name is William Henslow Barham in the deed, and his name was John."

"John was my grandfather's name," said Helen—"that I know very well, because I have his miniature set in gold, with the name at the back, with the day of his birth, and his age when it was taken."

"To be sure—to be sure," said old Carr, "his name was John. It was your great grandfather's name that was William, and the drunken clerk made a mistake in copying the old deeds. He shall have it back, every inch of it, and Warmstone Castle and all; and you, my dear young lady—why you will be a fortune. There is an old settlement, I know, providing for younger children. There will be plenty of back rents to pay, enough to beggar him, the coxcomb! Ha, ha, ha!" and again the old lawyer laughed at some merry subject in his own breast.

Helen, too, looked joyfully up, for the words of Mr. Carr awakened in her bosom various memories of the past, and convinced her that, whether he was right or wrong in the expectation of recovering a fortune for her brother, there was not wanting a foundation for what he said. She remembered, in her father's room, at

the Rectory, an old water-colour painting, dim with dust and age, but under which she had often spelt, in early years, the words "Warmstone Castle, the seat of John Henslow Barham, Esq;" and she remembered upon one occasion hearing her father and a neighbouring clergyman commenting upon the drawing, while she was standing near. Her father had then replied, in answer to some question put by his friend, "How did we lose the property? By the simplest process in the world. My father was a prodigal, and his son an honest man. That is the way that half the properties in Europe are lost."

The words had made an impression at the time, and Helen recollected them now, so that she gained, in some degree, a clue to the old lawyer's thoughts; and her heart, it must be owned, rejoiced; not for her own sake, poor girl, but for the sake of her brother. Her fancy was a lively one, and in an instant it presented to her mind's eye that unhappy young man, freed from all the troubles and difficulties in which he had placed himself, and—like him who was afterwards the victor of Agincourt—shaking from him the vices of his youth when placed in a loftier station.

I do not mean to say, that Helen thought not at all of herself; but she thought of herself only for a moment, and then shrunk away from the ideas that imagination conjured up. She could not but feel that it would be a joy and satisfaction—perhaps I might call it, more properly, a consolation, placed as they were at that moment—to meet Morley Ernstein, even for a brief space, as his equal in worldly gifts; and yet there was a voice whispered at the bottom of her heart, that there could never be anything like pride in her bosom towards him. Oh, could he but have loved her, how willingly would she have been the creature of his bounty — dependent upon him for everything on earth! From his hand she could have received all, and enjoyed all that she did receive, because it was he that gave it!

She would not pause upon such things—she dared not; and though she mused for several minutes over the various pictures called up, she soon returned to a consciousness of the questions which Mr. Carr was asking her, and to which, for a time, she had returned but irrelevant answers. She promised immediately to write to her brother urging him to return; or, at least, to tell him the facts, and let him re-

turn if he thought fit; and the conversation soon led to her own recollections of former times, in regard to which Mr. Carr cross-examined her as if she had been a witness at the Old Bailey.

There was something, however, Mr. Carr suffered to appear, which surprised and puzzled Helen in some degree. His words led her to imagine that her father had known fully that a fortune of considerable amount was due to himself and his children, but that on some account he had refused, or neglected to claim it. Helen enquired why, and more than once during their walk pressed Mr. Carr upon the subject. That gentleman would give her no distinct information, however, sometimes saying that it was a whim, sometimes saying that it was laziness; but, in truth, Mr. Carr did not choose to tell Helen that it was a conscientious scruple which had prevented Mr. Barham from pursuing the course pointed out by his legal adviser. There was something in the truth and simplicity of that sweet girl's heart which was formidable to knavery; and Mr. Carr at once understood that there would be difficulties with her which might not exist in the case of her brother, and he therefore avoided the question altogether.

They strolled on slowly till it was nearly dusk, and then returned towards the house, still conversing on the same subject, when, as they approached the front gate, walking over the crown of one of the little hilly fields in the neighbourhood, Mr. Carr's eyes were astonished and dazzled by the sight of a very handsome carriage standing opposite the iron railings, with two post-horses, hot and panting with a long stage.

"Who can that be?" said the old lawyer. "Thank God, I have not seen fools in gilded carriages for a long time! It must be either for you, Miss Barham, or there must be some mistake."

"Perhaps it is Morley Ernstein!" thought Helen Barham; but she did not speak it, for that was a name which deep feelings in her own bosom had prevented her from uttering once to the cold ear of Mr. Carr; and now, the very thought of Morley, probably, being there, made her heart flutter violently.

There was a servant out of livery standing at the carriage door, but no one was in the inside of the vehicle, and the iron gate was open. In the porch of the house, too, through the avenues of yews, could be seen one of Mr. Carr's maid-servants, as if looking out for his return;

and, as soon as they were within hearing, the girl exclaimed, in a jargon, which I shall not attempt to transpose to these pages—"There's a gentleman, sir, in the drawing-room, waiting to speak with Miss Barham upon business."

"Business!—Let me go in with you, Miss Barham," said the old lawyer; "perhaps my advice may be of use."

And as Helen saw no reasonable objection to be offered, she did not object, though she would rather have gone in alone. Her heart throbbed, and her knees somewhat trembled, but nobody could have perceived her agitation in the easy, graceful step in which she advanced towards the door of the drawing-room.

When she entered, however, all agitation ceased, though not surprise, for the person who came forward to meet her, with calm and tranquil aspect, was no other than Colonel Lieberg, who had been standing near the table, with his hat in his hand, waiting for her arrival, and affecting to look over an old illustrated copy of Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress," which the lawyer, from some unaccountable motive, would always have in a conspicuous part of the drawing-room.

"My dear Miss Barham," said Lieberg, tak-

ing her hand, with a smile, which certainly was as bright and engaging as any that ever crossed a mortal lip—"I dare say you are surprised to see me here; but, having obtained your address from your friends in London, I came hither with all speed from Doncaster, where I had some business to transact, knowing that you must be very anxious about your brother."

Helen glanced her eye to Mr. Carr, who was now entering the room, and lest Lieberg should suffer the secret of her brother's conduct to escape, she introduced the Count to her host, saying, "Colonel Lieberg—Mr. Carr;" and then immediately added, "I heard from my brother, sir, the other day. He wrote me a letter which quite relieved my apprehensions regarding him. I am very much obliged to you, indeed, however, for the kind trouble that you have taken. Pray sit down."

While she had been speaking, Lieberg with cool effrontery had measured Mr. Carr from head to foot with his eye, and returned his bow with a cold and stately inclination of the head. He turned to Helen, however, as soon as he had done so, saying—"I imagine from your words that my visit has been more useful than I expected, dear Miss Barham, for I have outran bad news that might have alarmed you."

Helen turned somewhat pale; for the idea of her brother having committed some fresh crime or folly was the first that imagination presented. Lieberg, however, who marked each variation of her cheek, hastened to relieve her.

"Do not be frightened," he said, "the danger is all past now. Your brother is well, and in safety; I left him at Deal, two days ago, but he was soon to follow me to London. The vessel he was in was wrecked upon the Goodwin Sands."

Helen clasped her fair hands together, and looked up to heaven, in Lieberg's eyes more beautiful than any object that he had ever beheld on earth. Had he dared, he would have thrown his arm round her, carried her, willingly or unwillingly, to the carriage at the gate, and bade the postilion drive anywhere on earth, so that he might secure possession of her. Such were the feelings which had grown up in his heart under the influence of opposition and disappointment; but, as is too usual, his demeanour was the most opposite that it is possible to imagine.

"Come, my dear young lady, sit down," he continued, "and do not let this matter agitate you. Poor William certainly has had a very narrow escape, and remained all night upon the wreck with the sea washing over him; but he

was much better when I left him, though somewhat bruised and chilled."

"Poor boy!" exclaimed Helen. "Oh! how I wish I could be with him!"

"That is what I was about to propose," said Lieberg, in a quiet, easy manner. "I think it would be better for you to be with him, for he really needs some nursing, and a sister's care and tenderness may make the difference of life and death to him."

"Good God!" cried Helen—"what shall I do? There is no one to take care of him there! —The very maid I have taken with me——"

"Nay," answered Lieberg, "do not suppose that I would leave him without aid, Miss Barham, if not on his own, on your account. I would not act such a part, believe me. I left him attended by a skilful surgeon, with plenty of money and every convenience; and in London I gave directions to my own servants to watch for his arrival in town, and treat him as if he were my own brother. You think me very hard-hearted and unkind, I see."

"Oh, no, no!" exclaimed Helen, clasping her hands again: "God in heaven will bless you! I will pray to him to bless you for your kindness and humanity to that poor boy."

A dark shade came over Lieberg's coun-

tenance, as it had done once before when Helen had used nearly similar expressions; but some words she added immediately afterwards, changed his feelings, whatever they were, making him believe himself on the point of succeeding to a greater extent than he had even dared to hope would be the case so speedily.

"What shall I do?" exclaimed Helen. "I wonder what I ought to do?"

Lieberg paused for a moment, not to seem too eager, and then replied—"I cannot think that you will hesitate, dear Miss Barham. Your brother wants much tendance and care, and——"

"Go, my dear young lady—go!" said Mr. Carr, much to Lieberg's surprise, at finding so unexpected an ally. "His life is infinitely valuable just now; and as you ought not to travel alone, I think I will go with you. We will have a post-chaise over to Doncaster to-morrow, and then take the coach to London."

Lieberg's countenance fell, and his expectations likewise. He laid a strong curse upon the old man in his own mind, and still more so, when Mr. Carr, with the sarcastic bitterness he sometimes displayed, added—"Colonel Lieberg would doubtless have much pleasure in escorting

you, but I think my plan is the most proper one."

Lieberg was instantly upon his guard, and he replied—"Most certainly, my dear sir; and though I should have been very happy to escort Miss Barham, yet I could scarcely have done so to-morrow, as I have business of importance to transact at Doncaster. There is one little matter I have to settle with you also, Mr. Carr," he continued; "you are, I think, the proprietor of the manors of Yelverly and Maxtown, and wish to let the sporting for the next year?"

Mr. Carr's face assumed quite a different aspect; he smiled graciously upon Lieberg, and replied that such was certainly the case. He had long given up shooting himself, he said—his family required very little game; it annoyed him to deal with poachers continually; and therefore he always liked to let his manors when possible; that the two years' lease of them had lately fallen in, and the gentleman who had before taken them, being but a poor, second-rate sort of man, had not been able to keep them on. There could not be better manors in Europe, he continued. There were the finest covers it was possible to see; the best partridge-ground in Europe; trout-streams,

where the fish jostled each other in the river; and moors, the higher parts of which were actually swarming with grouse and black game.

Lieberg appeared charmed with the account, regretted that it was too late to take a canter over the ground that afternoon, but added, that he would return the next morning to see them, that he might know how the ground lay. He imagined, he said, that he could not find an inn without either returning to Doncaster or going on to Bingley, and he should prefer the latter, as it was much nearer, and there were also two manors there which he had heard of, and which he could see early in the morning, before he returned.

Now, Lieberg had taken care to get plenty of good information at Doncaster, and knew perfectly well that, in a sporting point of view, the manors at Bingley were infinitely preferable to those of Mr. Carr. Mr. Carr was very well aware of the same fact, and, bent upon taking in Lieberg to hire the sporting of his manors, instead of the better ones a little further on, he was himself taken in to ask Lieberg to stay the night, which was all that his visitor wanted. It may seem that he employed a complicated manœuvre to obtain that

end, but in truth it was a very simple one, with a man who knew the facts, and saw profoundly into the heart, as Lieberg did.

Mr. Carr assured him that, after the manors of Yelverly and Maxtown, the two manors at Bingley were not worth his seeing. He took down the county map, and demonstrated to him that the estates could not be compared for a moment, with as much ease as any other falsehood can be demonstrated when there is nobody to contradict it. If Colonel Lieberg would do him the honour of taking a bed at Yelverly, they could very easily ride over the manors in the morning, before it was necessary for himself and Miss Barham to set off for Doncaster. The coach from York was late ere it passed, he said, and they had plenty of time before them.

Lieberg, on his part, affected to be afraid of putting Mr. Carr to inconvenience—there was his servant, too; he really thought he had better go on to Bingley for the night. But Mr. Carr was determined that such should not be the case—a bed could be found for the servant, too. His calculation was, that the whole expenses of Lieberg's stay, even if his servant had beer and meat for supper, and the Count himself took a glass of wine before he went to

bed, could not amount to four shillings, while, if he missed the opportunity of letting his shooting for two years, it might be a couple of hundreds of pounds out of his pocket, besides all the expenses of gamekeepers, lookers, &c. The matter, then, was at length arranged, the post-horses sent away, Lieberg's carriage placed in the yard, and his valet, with his goods and chattels, brought into the house.

The Count very soon suffered to appear, without saying so directly, how much he proposed to give for the shooting he desired, and from that moment Mr. Carr's civilities knew no bounds. Tea was sent for, and Helen Barham presided over the "odoriferous infusion," as some gentleman, prodigal of fine words, has called it; while Lieberg, seating himself by her side, put forth all his powers of fascination, which, as we have before informed the reader, were anything but small. He had a peculiar habit of fixing his large dark eyes, with all their deep, intense light, upon the persons to whom he spoke, not with what is termed a stare, or anything that could be looked upon as rude or annoying; but with a sort of thoughtful interest, as if that glance established a communication between his soul and theirs, making thought answer to thought, before any words

were spoken. There was something overpowering in it, especially when he used all his exertions to please, as he did this night; and, in truth, as he sat there, gazing on the lovely face of Helen Barham, it might well put one in mind of the serpent fascinating the bright birds of the warm climates of the south, by the lustre of his dangerous eyes.

In this case, however, the bird had a talisman which set such magic at defiance; and, though there was in his whole conversation and demeanour, that mingling of sportiveness and depth; that appearance of pride bent down to please, of confident reliance on innate powers of mind, yet deference to the opinions of the being spoken to; that light and sparkling brilliancy, which seems merely the sport of strength; that combination of all things, in short, which are engaging—except the heart—though the manifold expressions that he brought over his fine and striking countenance rendered the beauty thereof more marked and attractive; though every movement was full of grace and gentlemanly suavity—though all those small cares and little attentions, which win so much upon the heart of woman, seemed as familiar to him as any of the daily acts of life, yet upon Helen Barham the whole had no more effect

than to make a few hours pass pleasantly, and occupy her somewhat sad and wandering thoughts. Reader, she was in love with another!

What was the effect upon Lieberg himself? His arts recoiled and wounded him; her beauty, her grace, her talents, her enthusiasms, all struck and captivated him more than he had ever been with any other mortal being; but, strange as it may seem, her indifference attracted him more than all. He saw it—he could not help seeing it. There was something to conquer, and he resolved to conquer it. But how? —that was the question. It mattered not! Lieberg was one who had few scruples of any kind. "Once she be mine," he thought, "I will soon teach her to love me. First let me overcome her, and the rest will be easy enough."

I have said that Lieberg's presence and conversation made the hours pass pleasantly to Helen Barham. It cannot be denied that such was the case, and that she certainly thought him one of the most gentlemanly and agreeable men she had ever met with, though nothing more. She grew much more cheerful, however, under this influence, and was prevailed upon, ere the evening came to an end, to sit down to Juliet's piano, and sing one of those songs for which her full rich voice was peculiarly

adapted. It was at Mr. Carr's request that she did so, and he named a song that he had heard his daughter sing.

Helen had sung it many a time before; and she sat down without dreaming that either the words or the music would touch her in the least; but the changes that are within us affect the influence of all external things upon ourselves, fully as much as the changes of external things affect our feelings. Since last she had sung that song, there was a new spirit in the breast of Helen Barham, and a new sensation—love and hopelessness. In the stormiest hours of former days she had not given way to despair; though the spot on which she stood was ever so dark, there had been bright hopes lighting the future. But now, the cloud hung above the coming days—dark, impenetrable, gloomy; and if we could make a distinction between hopelessness and despair, we might say that the former was her state, rather than the latter. Thus it was she herself was changed, and yet the song seemed entirely altered to her. It spoke to her heart; it seemed to thrill through her bosom; it was like the voice of her own sorrows poured forth whether she would or not; and the very feeling with which

she sang, the expression she gave to each note, acted upon herself even more than upon those that heard her, and made the tears rise in her eyes, and well nigh overflow when she had done.

The song had a great effect upon Lieberg, too; it made him sad, though it excited him; it seemed like the voice of an angel singing to a fallen spirit, mourning over his degradation and loss, and drawing from his heart tears of regret, though not of repentance—the glow of shame, though not of contrition. For, as the inspired writer says—"There is a shame that bringeth sin; and there is a shame which is glory and grace." There were moments with him, as with all others like him, when he felt the bitterness of wrong, but without even a dream of turning unto right; and one of the times at which that feeling was most strong upon him was when he heard plaintive music—not the music of the opera, of the concert, or the oratorio, for those are places in which it is easy to cast aside one's heart, and become the mere connoisseur, but the song sung in private, the piece of music played by a delicate hand, and breathing softly to the ear, like the low, still voice of conscience, or like the tongue of memory, speaking to us of early days—of innocence—and of peace.

Such was the case now; and when Helen had done, when she had turned away till the drops had disappeared from her eyelids, and looked round again, she saw Lieberg sitting with his head bent thoughtfully forward, his eyes fixed sadly upon the ground, and his whole attitude and look displaying deep and sad abstraction. Had Helen's affections been free, that would have been the moment in which Lieberg would have made more impression upon her than at any other, for the widest door of woman's heart is pity, and he seemed sorrowful.

The effect soon passed away with the whole party, and not long after, Mr. Carr left the room for a moment, to see for some supper, as he expressed it. Strange to say, Lieberg was agitated; he, the calm, the composed, the immovable, felt shaken in a way that he had never known in all his earthly course before; and angry at himself for what he called such weakness, he at length drew a little nearer to Helen's side—who, as if placed in stronger opposition than ever to him, was not in the least degree agitated or embarrassed—and said—"Dear Miss Barham, I wish very much to obtain a few minutes' private conversation with you."

Helen looked a little surprised, but answered

with a degree of calmness that provoked him—"Certainly!—I suppose about my brother, of course—I hope there is nothing worse concerning him to be told me, Count Lieberg!"

Lieberg resolved to keep her imagination at work, and he replied—"Nothing worse exactly, but still something of much importance."

"Can you not tell me now?" she asked, eagerly; but ere he could reply, Mr. Carr returned, and did not quit the room again, till Helen Barham rose and proposed to retire to rest.

Lieberg and Mr. Carr sat for about a quarter of an hour after she was gone, and the Count then was shewn to his room, which he found a very comfortable one; while the display of all his dressing apparatus had given it even an air of splendour, notwithstanding the dimity curtains, and the plain Kidderminster carpet. The valet, Martini, was still busy, arranging everything in the place, when Lieberg entered, and the Count having made him take out some writing materials, sat down, and wrote—

"Dear Miss Barham—Will you kindly write underneath, merely in pencil, at what time tomorrow I can have a few minutes' conversation with you alone, upon the subject that we mentioned?"

"There, take that!" he said, folding up the paper, "and find out Miss Barham's maid directly; bid her give it to her mistress, and let me have an answer."

The valet took the note, and disappeared. Helen's toilette for the night was well nigh done, and she was on the point of seeking her bed, when she received it; and, guileless and innocent herself, without a thought of evil, she wrote underneath the lines sent by Lieberg, in pencil, "Whenever you like.—Helen Barham."

When the note was brought back, Lieberg gazed at it with a keen, triumphant look, though his cheek was pale with intense feeling.

"Do you know which is Miss Barham's room?" he said, addressing the valet.

"The one at the end of the corridor, sir," said the man; "that on the right; the opposite door leads to a store-room, I find."

"And where do you sleep yourself, Martini?" said Lieberg.

"I sleep just above Miss Barham's room, sir," replied the man.

"Get a horse early to-morrow," said Lieberg; "go over to the post-office at Doncaster, and let me have my letters before eleven."

The man bowed, and very little further con-

versation took place, while Lieberg undressed, and retired to bed. His last words were, "Leave the light burning."

As soon as the man was gone, Lieberg rose from his bed again, carefully cut the sheet of note-paper on which he had written to Helen in two, separating the part containing his enquiry from Helen's reply, burnt the former part, and then gazed steadfastly upon the other, repeating —"Whenever I like!—whenever I like!—I like this very night!—This shall justify me;" and putting the paper into his desk, he extinguished the light, and retired to bed again, but not to sleep.

CHAPTER VII.

For a short space we must not only leave sweet Helen Barham in the house of Yelverly, but Lieberg, with all machinations in his head, and turn to schemes of a different kind, and at a different spot. It was in the back room of a low public house that, on the very day which witnessed Lieberg's arrival in London from the town of Deal, there sat together four as powerful and determined-looking fellows as ever perhaps met, with a view of consulting upon the grand purpose of cutting a purse, or proving that there are other people, as well as the little god of love, who can laugh at locksmiths. In the chair—for it will always be found, in civil and political matters alike, that the meetings which assemble for the purpose of setting all laws and regulations at

defiance, must have their laws and regulations likewise—in the chair of this gallant and respectable assembly, was placed that worthy gentleman, Harry Martin, whom we have had the honour of bringing before our readers on more than one occasion. On his right was a gentleman who was delivering himself with a great deal more eloquence than is usually met with, either on the hustings or the Commons House of Parliament—though, like the oratory of those places, his had its peculiar characteristics, which suited it to the auditory who were to hear it—he was delivering himself, I say, of a speech, to which I can only do partial justice, both from a want of a thorough knowledge of the copious tongue in which it was composed; and also from lack of space to give all the figures of rhetoric, the tropes, the metaphors, the similes, with which it was ornamented. The tendency of the speech, however, was to incite his hearers to undertake a great enterprise; and an expedition against Carthage, or a war against Philip, was never debated with more vehemence and animation.

"I'll tell you what, Simes," he said—"you think that Martin and I do this out of regard to Bill Barham; but I tell you it is no such thing. I do

it only, because I think that such good luck does not fall in a man's way every day. Did you ever see a blackbird, on a sunshiny morning, sitting upon a bough, and singing as quietly as I might do at the club? Well, if he sees a great fat worm wriggle out his head, down he pounces upon him, and never ceases pulling till he has got him all out of his hole. Well, I am the blackbird, and this Old Miser Carr is the worm. I have sat cherupping here in London for a long while, till I got scent of this old fellow, and now I'll pounce upon him just like a sparrowhawk upon a ground-lark. We will get help enough, if you don't like to go; its not every man that has the same liberality of feeling as you think you have, to refuse his share of four or five thousand pound, just for a little bit of a smash that can be done in a minute, and we can be all over to Sheffield again, and then to London, before any one knows that we have been in the place at all. If the thing were to be done near town, I would not press it upon you, gentlemen, for there's all the risk in the world of being trapped, if we do such things too near home. But down there it's easy to do, and not easy to discover; and when four or five thousand pound is to be got, it's worth the touch

of a crow-bar, or ten minutes' work with the centrebit."

"Ay, but there's the job!" cried the man he called Simes; "I want to be made sure that the thing's worth the journey. I can pick up a nice little living here in London, without going down into Yorkshire, and perhaps getting myself hanged into the bargain; so let me be sure, I say, that there is this tin, or I shall say, I would rather be excused. I am not fond of eating an empty pudding, and do not particularly like the cordwainer's company. I don't choose to be made a freeman of it, and wear the riband upon the jugular; not that I am afraid, when there's anything really to be done, but I should like to know more about the money first."

"Why, as for that, Mr. Simes," observed a stout man, with a hawk's nose, on his right hand; "you see I knew the country well enough, not long ago, when I used to do a little with the thimbles, at Doncaster. You may recollect that we, one time, had an engagement with the other gentlemen of the course; but they were too much for us, and drove us off with the butt ends of their horsewhips, and then we scattered about the country. Well, I had a gossip with

one of the maids there, and sold her some real French muslin, which I picked up at York, and I asked her all about her master, Old Carr, the miser, as they called him in those parts, and she said he was prodigious rich, and never had less than two or three thousand pounds in the house, besides lots of plate."

"You hear, Simes," said Harry Martin; "so you see, whatever you may think, we don't stand only upon what Bill Barham says, because Bill does not know whether the man's rich or poor, and only knows that he's called Carr, the miser. However, you shan't want for full information; Bill has promised to bring some one with him here to-night who knows the whole place, and the people round about, for he was the Squire's groom at Bingley, which is close by. His name's Andrews, and he's now in another way of business, as a horse-dealer—and has done a clever thing or two."

"Oh, yes," replied Simes, "I know him very well—a pleasant gentleman he is. He sold old Major Groundsell the same horse three times over; first, as a black horse, with not a spot of white about him; then with the two fore feet white; and then he shaved him, docked him, and made another creature of him; but the Major could never ride him first nor last."

"No, nor anybody else," said another of the men present, "for he was a plunger, a bolter, and a rearer, and when he couldn't get you off he went over with you."

"A pleasant chap to be on the outside of," said Harry; "but let us have some more lap. Mr. Simes, may I trouble you to ring the bell. Oh, here comes Bill, and Mr. Andrews too! Mr. Andrews, good evening to you—I hope you're well, sir."

Various civilities now took place between the whole party, for the meeting was evidently a formal one, and gentlemen of that class are generally much more ceremonious on such occasions than people who consider themselves better bred. Fresh supplies of drink were brought, and as soon as the room was again clear, the subject matter of the debate was once more brought forward, and the account given by Mr. Tony Andrews was so conclusive, that even the cautious soul of Mr. Simes was fired with generous ardour, and it was determined, nem. con., that the thing should be undertaken. As soon as this was settled, William Barham—who occupied a seat by the side of Harry Martin, but a little behind the general line, not being one of the active participators in the enterprise—whispered a word or two in his friend's ear, who

immediately pronounced a new oration upon the occasion. The tendency of the harangue was to shew the absolute necessity that there existed of setting about the thing at once; but in this, Martin met with no opposition whatsoever, for every man present was a veteran in his profession, and knew well that in great undertakings promptness of execution is only secondary to maturity of deliberation.

"I'm ready this minute," said Simes—"I only want to go home to get a tool or two."

"And I think there's no time to be lost either," said the man with the hook nose. "But," continued he, turning his left eye downward, and looking with that orb alone into the bottom of his glass with an air of deliberate wisdom—"but how are we to go? If we four get upon the mail together, the guard will be in such a fuss about his bags, that he'll blow who we are, all the way down. Then, I think, Harry, you talked of your mare and the gig; but your mare can't run half the way, and the gig wont hold four, though I've seen you put three into it, and bad enough it looked."

"Oh, I'll lend you a phaeton for one horse," cried Mr. Andrews—"and if Mr. Martin can make him run forty miles before this time to-

morrow, I'll give you a note to a friend of mine at ——, who will contrive to horse you on. You see, gentlemen, I shall expect a trifle—not so much, in course, as if I went out of town myself, but say a tenth, and upon honour."

The claim was agreed to, upon the condition of the horses being all ready and no mistakes made; and then the gentleman with the beak again brought his peculiar eye to bear upon the lump of sugar at the bottom of the tumbler, and remarked—"What I said myself, just now, gives me a good hint. Suppose we were to get Jerry Knowles and Sam Harrison to——"

"Oh, that will never do," cried Mr. Andrews, who was a man that stood upon his reputation, "those gentlemen have such a bad character that we must not bring them into the business, for there's always somebody looking out after them."

"That's the very reason," said the other. "You gentlemen from Yorkshire are so quick, that you see gooseberries upon cherry trees. These are the very men who ought to be employed for what I mean. The worse, the better for my purpose. We put dung upon a field, to make it bear, not ice cream. What I mean to say is, that everything is good in its way, and these gentlemen, though they certainly have

gained themselves a reputation, may very well serve my purpose."

"Well, well! what is it?" exclaimed Harry Martin, impatiently, for he loved long speeches in nobody's mouth but his own. "Speak out, and let us hear!"

"It is," answered the hook-nosed man, "that they should be sent down by coach to Doncaster, with a promise of a five-pound note each, if the thing answers. They can go down by coach, you know, and be absent for a day or two, and go back again, taking care to get into mischief, and to have proof of where they were."

"Oh, I understand—I understand!" cried two or three voices at once.

"As a blind," said Harry Martin—"a devilish good plan; and then if they get into the brown jug, we must give them a trifle more."

Some farther conversation in the same strain took place; and then Harry Martin said in a low voice to William Barham—"But what share are you to have, Will?"

"Not a farthing," answered the boy eagerly, "not a farthing. If you get me those papers that's all I care about. He always carries them in a Russia leather pocket-book, in a pocket

inside his coat. It is a brown pocket-book, you know, with a steel spring and clasp."

"But are you snre he is there?" asked Martin.

Bill nodded his head, saying, in a low tone—"Helen is there, and he'll find a way to fix himself where she is. But the papers are all I want."

"Well, well, you shall have them," answered Harry; "and if I find the fellow himself, I'll put my mark upon him. Now, Simes, you get your tools, and I'll get mine and have the horse in the phaeton before a couple of hours are over. Let's all meet and have a little supper here at ten o'clock, and then we can drive out pleasant by the moonlight."

The rest of their arrangements were soon settled, and the party separated; William Barham returning to his own abode, where he remained for several days, waiting, with no light anxiety, to hear the result of an enterprise which was first devised for his benefit.

CHAPTER VIII.

No sleep visited the eyes of Everard, Count Lieberg. He heard people moving about, doors opened and closed, and various other sounds, for near an hour. Then all was silent, and remained so for another hour. At the end of that time he raised himself upon his elbow and listened, struck his repeater, which gave him half-past one; lay down for about a quarter of an hour more, with his head resting upon his hand, and then started, at hearing sounds again. A muttered curse broke from his lips, and he sat up, endeavouring to distinguish what could be the occupation of the person who was watching, and busy at that "very witching time of night." He could make nothing of it, however, for his ear only caught a low whirring sort of sound, very

much like that of a watch running down. He thought he heard some people speaking or whispering also in the court, and rising from his bed he threw on his dressing-gown, drew back the curtain of his window, and looked out.

It was a bright and beautiful moonlight night as ever was seen. One could almost distinguish the blades of green grass in the turfed court below; but Lieberg could perceive nothing of any human being. He found, indeed, that the penthouse of the large shed, which I have mentioned as disfiguring the front of the building, came nearly up to the window of his room; and he concluded that the noise he heard must proceed from some of the early farm servants, busily at work in those agricultural mysteries which he himself did not understand. By this time, however, the sound had ceased, and another kind of noise succeeded for a moment, which also came to an end, and then all was quiet.

Silence maintained her reign for about a quarter of an hour, during which time Lieberg gazed out upon a scene which was well calculated to afford high and holy thoughts, had his been a breast to receive them. The beautiful orb, which, like woman's love to man, follows this earthly sphere through all its wandering

course, was shining bright and pure, in her highest glory. The green lawn, the dark yew trees, the sloping upland, the well-trimmed hedges, caught the rays as they fell, and deep shadows, like those which must ever fall to the eye of memory over various spots in the past, when we look back from the end of a long life, were cast over the turf from every rising object. Round about, at a distance from their queen, in the blue heaven,—for those that were near were swallowed up in her light,—the bright attendant stars filled up the glory of the sky, and spoke to man's heart of the majesty of that God who made a thousand worlds, and yet bows himself to regard the lowest being on the earth.

Such, however, were not the thoughts with which Lieberg gazed. We shall not, indeed, attempt to penetrate them; they were deep, inscrutable, and would do no good to the mind of any one. Suffice it, that as his eye strayed upon the dark blue expanse, and seemed shooting back rays to the bright orb above him, a dark shadow came upon his brow, his lip curled, his head was raised higher than before, his chest expanded, as if with some struggle within him. Indeed, it would seem that he heard some

warning voice, and succeeded in drowning it in the clamour of pride and passion, for he muttered to himself as he turned from the window —"So hypocrites would tell us, and so fools would yield!"

He left the curtains open, and with a quiet and steady step, walked towards the door. As he did so, however, and as his hand was actually upon the lock to open it, he thought he heard a faint cry, and paused for a minute to listen. "Busy imagination!" he said, finding the sound was not repeated; and he opened the door.

All was dark, but the moonlight, which streamed through his room, crossed the corridor and gave a faint light. There was a sudden step heard in the passage, and Lieberg instantly drew back; but before he could shut the door, or see what was coming, he received a heavy blow upon the head, which struck him to the ground, and for a few minutes deprived him of all thought and feeling. When he opened his eyes, one of the candles on his dressing-table was lighted, and he saw two tall, stout men, covered with smock frocks, each with a large piece of black crape drawn over his face, busily engaged, the one in packing up quietly all his dressing apparatus, at least that part of it which

was formed of silver or gold, whilst the other, who had, to say the truth, opened various portmanteaus and carriage-boxes, without their master's privity or consent, was examining a purse and a pocket-book by the light of a candle.

Lieberg was a man of dauntless courage; and though there were two to one against him, yet he strove to rise, trusting to his own powers to enable him to contend successfully with the housebreakers, till he received some assistance. The very first effort to move, however, shewed him that his hands were tied tightly behind his back, and his feet linked together, for which purpose two of his own silk handkerchiefs had been employed. As soon as he found that such was the case, he perceived that it was vain to make any effort; and he took his resolution at once, lying as still as if he was dead, and only watching the proceedings of the plunderers, through his half-closed eyes.

After having examined the contents of the pocket-book, the man put it in his pocket, saying to himself, "That will do!" He then proceeded to aid his companion, and their arrangements were very soon made. The larger articles were tied up in a towel; Lieberg's rings, watch, seal, and various other trinkets, were disposed about

their persons, and then, shading again a dark lantern which they had brought with them, they approached the door, leaving the candle burning on the table. Lieberg closed his eyes completely, and lay quite still, though his heart burnt within him; and had there been the slightest possibility of success, had he been able to free himself, even in a degree, he would have undoubtedly struggled up, at all risks, rather than remain in a situation which wounded his pride perhaps more than anything that had ever occurred to him in life.

He could hear, as he lay with his eyes shut, however, that the two men stopped beside him; and the one said to the other—

"You've done for him, Harry!"

"No, I haven't!" exclaimed the other, in a loud, rough tone. "D—n his heart and limbs, I have a great mind to do for him, though! He's only stunned, like—see how he breathes! but if he were up to knowing why I did it, I'd take and thrash him till I drove the soul out of his body. I'll tell you what—this is the fellow that you heard of, who got hold of the poor boy, and threatened to hang him for forgery, if he wouldn't make his sister go into keeping with him. Now, that's what I

call being a rascal, indeed. These gentlefolks call you and I, blackguards, and scamps, and criminals, and felons; now, I should like to know who is the greatest rascal, who is the greatest felon—he or I? I never take anything but a little money from those that can spare it, but he—curse the pitiful mongrel—wants to take away a poor girl's life and soul, and threatens to hang her brother if he wont help him. If it were with all her own good will, I've nothing to say; but to think to go to buy her with the price of her brother's blood!—if that isn't a blackguard trick, I don't know what is. How it happens that what you call gentlemen keep him amongst them, I can't say; but I know if he were to come amongst us, we would kick him out. But come along; if I stand looking at him any longer, I shall do a something that I shall be sorry for. I don't like taking a man's life in that way, unless he stands up to me; so come along, for I feel inclined to put my foot upon him, and tread his dirty soul out, as I would to a toad."

The next moment came the sound of receding steps, and then voices were heard, speaking in another part of the house, and then doors opening and shutting again, and

what seemed tones of lamentation and supplication. Those were followed by the banging-to of a heavy door, and the sound of a key turned in the lock; and then all was still, till what seemed the noise of distant cart-wheels came upon the air, and silence resumed her sway again.

All these sounds Lieberg might have heard, and did hear as far as the external organs were concerned, but his heart was moved with passions far too strong for the mental ear to give heed to anything. Had it been possible for his strong, clear mind to give way, it would have yielded at that instant, when, lying bound and helpless, and forced to counterfeit insensibility, he listened to the comments of a low-born ruffian upon his own base conduct, and felt himself, in spite of all the resistance of vanity, placed in a state of utter degradation both in his own eyes and in those of the two men who had been gazing upon him. There was no excess of frantic vehemence in which he could not have indulged had he given way to the sensations of his heart; but, instead of doing so, he lay perfectly still, concentrating all his feelings within his own dark bosom, and continuing to shut his eyes, as if to prevent the rage over which he brooded,

from venting itself by any of the senses whatsoever.

It required nearly an hour for his feelings to become tranquil in any degree, and during that time everything remained quiet in the house, while the calm, sweet dawn of day came gradually on, throwing warmer and warmer tints into the room, till at length all was sunshine. As soon as the day was bright and high, the ear of Lieberg caught the sound of knocking and shaking, as if some persons at the top of the house were locked in a room, and trying to make themselves heard. Then came the voice of his own servant, Martini, exclaiming, with his Italian accent—"Why have you locked me in? Some one let me out! My master ordered me to go for the letters early. Let me out, I say!"

"We can't!" screamed a woman's voice, still further off; "they have locked us in, too."

"They!" exclaimed the voice of Martini, again—"who the devil are they?"

"The men who broke in, and robbed the house, and murdered my master and the strange gentleman—I dare say," screamed the woman, who had spoken before. "Lord have mercy upon us! I saw one of their black faces"—and

she plunged into a personal description of the housebreakers, which was certainly borrowed very greatly from imagination, although she had preserved judgment enough, as she said, to lie still, pretending to be asleep, and do nothing but shiver while the men were in the room. This was the lady who exercised the function of cooking, which is a wakeful sort of profession, there arising a kind of salamanderishness in the nature of a cook, from living constantly in fiery atmospheres, which prevents her from giving way more than is absolutely necessary to the cold and frozen state of sleep. The housemaid, however, following the characteristics of housemaids, had slept through the whole, and did not even wake with the cook's shivering, although the latter was her bedfellow, and added a number of thumps in the side to rouse her, as soon as she found courage to move hand or foot. Not even did the shouted dialogue between her close companion and Signor Martini disturb her slumbers, and the conversation soon dropped.

At length, the notes of some early countryman, whistling gaily as he went to his labour, caught Lieberg's ear, and he now raised his voice, calling to his servant as loud as it was possible; and bidding him, holla out of the

window, and tell the man to break open the doors. Fortunately, Martini's ears were quick, and he heard and distinguished his master's orders. The window was thrown open, and several loud shouts soon brought the countryman, who was passing along the road, into the green court, and under Martini's window.

"What is the matter, master?" he cried. "What do you want? It seems Master Carr has got you there in a cage, that you are chirping out so early in the morning."

"I want to be let out," exclaimed Martini. "Break open the doors, and let me out."

"No, no," said the man, "that wont do. We never meddle with any of Master Carr's birds. He's a queer hand to deal with, and so I'll let him alone."

He was actually stalking off, when the head of the cook popped out of another window, and she exclaimed — "Master Turnbull—Master Turnbull! break open the door, there's a dear heart! There have been robbers and murderers in the house last night; and I don't doubt you'll find master, with his throat cut, down stairs. Do break open the door, there's a good soul, and let us out, for we are all locked in together; though by the blessing of God, we are all alive!"

"I'll go and get somebody to help me," said the man, with a knowing look—"the fellows may be there still. It would take them some time to break open old Carr's strong box, I take it. No one ever got in there easily. I'll go and get help—you wait there till I come."

The poor cook had no choice except that of doing so, or throwing herself down upon the top of the penthouse, and probably breaking her legs; and the man began to walk away, with as slow a step as if he had been following the plough. Fortune, however, decided that their state of durance should not continue much longer; for no sooner had Master Turnbull issued forth into the road again, than his eyes lighted upon two labourers, coming leisurely up towards him. With their aid and assistance he now determined to encounter all the powers of darkness which might be found in Mr. Carr's house, and approached with a steady purpose of breaking open the door, and restoring egress and regress to the inhabitants. All violent proceedings, however, were spared him; for, on coming nearer, he found that one of the windows, under the shed which we have before mentioned, was wide open, a large hole having been cut in the window shutter with a saw, and the

sash having been raised quietly by a hand introduced through the aperture.

One of the labourers made his way in by this entrance; but in the meantime, Master Turnbull had been examining the door, and discovered that, though it was locked, the key was on the outside. This he turned, and, accompanied by the other peasant, entered by the ordinary passage. The first thing that the three deliverers did, was to proceed together to that part of the house from which they had heard articulate sounds; and the door of the maid's room, as well as that of the valet, was opened. Forth from their several apartments issued the male tenant, in haste to set his master free—the cook, all alive to look after her old gentleman, as she called him—and the housemaid, still rubbing her eyes.

The countrymen followed as quick as it was in their nature, upon the steps of Martini, to Count Lieberg's room, and arrived in time to see the valet raise his master from the floor, and place him in a chair. The floor of the room displayed a good deal of blood, which had flowed from Lieberg's head, and Master Turnbull exclaimed—"Lackadaisy, that is a bad cut!"

"Off my hands, off my hands, first!" exclaimed

Lieberg, as Martini was endeavouring to untie the tight knot round his ancles. "Cut it, cut it!" What matters the price of a handkerchief, in comparison with this torture?"

The man took a knife from his pocket, and, solving these Gordian knots in the Alexandrine fashion, set his master at liberty.

"Now, my men," cried Lieberg, "where can my servant find a magistrate?"

"Oh, there's a magistrate at Bingley, master," replied Turnbull; "but you can't get a surgeon nearer than Doncaster."

"Never mind a surgeon," said Lieberg; "never mind a surgeon, for me at least. What has become of Mr. Carr and Miss Barham?"

"That we can't tell," replied one of the peasants; "the maids are gone to see after them."

"Let us go too; though," replied Lieberg, "they would not hurt the lady, and I do not think, from what they said, that they have killed the old man. But let us go and see—some one had better run for a magistrate immediately. These fellows must be pursued at once."

As Lieberg spoke, he rose from the chair in which he had been placed; but for some moments he could scarcely stand, and, motioning the rest to leave him, he said—"Go quick,

go quick! I must put on some more clothes. Go with them, Martini, and bring me intelligence as soon as may be."

The man obeyed at once, and Lieberg proceeded to dress himself, as quickly as possible, though it was but slowly after all—for both his arms and feet were cramped and swollen, from the tightness of the ligatures which had bound them. As he proceeded, he paused two or three times in thought, and once struck his hand vehemently upon the dressing-table, saying —"Curses upon them!—Well, well, Martini," he exclaimed, as the man entered the room; "what have you found?—what has happened?"

There was a grin upon the man's countenance which assured Lieberg that no life had been lost; and the Italian replied—"We found the old man, sir, tied naked to the bed-post, cold, shivering, and miserable enough, but he has contrived to warm himself since, for never did I see a man in such a fury about his money and his plate? They have cleared the whole house out, that is certain, and got some seven thousand pounds, the old man says."

"They have got five or six hundred from me," said Lieberg. "But what of Miss Barham?"

"Oh, she is very well, sir, I suppose," said the man, with a peculiar expression of counte-

nance. "I met her maid just now going to her room, and she did not say that her mistress had been disturbed at all. The truth is, sir," he added, approaching close to Lieberg, and speaking in a low tone, "I did hear some noise in the night, but I did not know what it might be, and thought it better to keep quiet, and take no notice."

Lieberg shut his teeth hard, and clenched his hand with a frowning brow; but he made no reply, and having dressed himself as far as was necessary, issued forth and proceeded to the room of Mr. Carr. That gentleman was coming out, with nothing but his stockings, breeches, and a grey dressing gown on; and grasping Lieberg's arm, he dragged him on towards the drawing-room, saying, "They have robbed me—they have plundered me—they have ruined me, sir!"

Now there was nothing on earth that excited Lieberg's scorn and hatred so much as to see a human being give way to passion or emotion, simply because he had great powers of concealing his own; and the agony of Mr. Carr, on account of his loss, only served to curl his companion's lip with a contemptuous smile, and render all his movements, as if for the contrast's sake, as cool, as self-possessed as possible.

While the old man, then, walked about the

room in a state of half-frenzied agitation, Lieberg calmly approached the table, and after looking at him for a moment, with a cold, sneering, gaze, he opened quietly the leaves of Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress, and began to turn over the engravings.

"Do you know, Mr. Carr," he said, in the tone of a connoisseur, "I think they have made a very great mistake in representing Apollyon as so fearfully ugly. Surely, if that good gentleman, who tempts us all, be so frightful as he is here put down, we sinners must be men of good stomachs to run after his sweet things so greedily."

Mr. Carr thought him perfectly insane; but Lieberg went on in the same spirit—"He should be rendered very beautiful and attractive, powerful certainly, and well armed, but still very charming; for we all of us paint our own particular fiend as a pleasant, sweet personage. Now you, for instance, never represent to yourself Mammon with horns and a tail, and all this paraphernalia of episodical horrors, fangs, and hoofs, and claws, and all that sort of a thing. I dare say, in your eyes, he is a sweet little cherub, with a purse in his hand, as I paint Asteroth to myself as a beautiful woman."

The miser gazed at him as if he had suddenly found himself in the presence of a furious madman, and he exclaimed vehemently, in the first excitement of passion, "Why I believe that you are Satan himself! Is it not enough to drive me mad, to have lost seven thousand pounds in one night, without having a stranger insulting me in my own drawing-room, talking of Asteroth, and Mammon, and Apollyon, and all the follies that ever were concocted in the brain of that half-drunken idiot, John Bunyan? —Was it you that robbed me?—How should I know that it was not?—I never saw you before—you may have had a hand in it for aught I know!"

"It is very probable," answered Lieberg, "especially as there has been another robbery committed in your house that you are not aware of, and that to a large amount."

Mr. Carr instantly ran to a little old oak cabinet, and shook the door to see if it had been opened. All was safe, however, and he exclaimed, "Where?—how?—in what room?"

"In my room"—answered Lieberg; "that is to say, in the room where I slept last night; and where, if I robbed you as you say, I committed the folly of robbing myself also, to the

amount of some six or seven hundred pounds—It seems to me, Mr. Carr," he continued, in a quicker but less ironical tone, "that this loss of yours has made you mad, and that instead of thinking of recovering your property by pursuing these men at once, with all the activity in your nature, you are, instead, raving like an insane person. Why don't you saddle every horse in your stable, and track the wheels of the cart in which they carried off your goods and mine? I have already sent for a magistrate, and no time ought to be lost in taking other measures."

"True—very true, Count!" said Mr. Carr, who, now that the first burst of passion had passed, was coming to his senses again, and recollected that it would not do to offend a guest, who was likely to hire his manors—"I will send out some men directly. I beg your pardon, sir, for being so violent, but this is a great loss.—We must despatch people to the village, too, and after we have taken all sorts of measures, we can just go over the manors together. But, dear me, what shall I do about going to town with Miss Barham?—Hark!—what is that? There is somebody calling me—they do not know where to find us. Perhaps they have

found some of the plate. It was very heavy, and the men may have thrown it away. Here I am—here I am!" he continued, putting his head out of the drawing-room door, "What do you want with me? Have you found anything?"

"No, sir, no!" exclaimed the cook, running up with eager eyes. "We have not found anything, but what is worse than finding anything in this world, we can't find the young lady—we can't find Miss Barham!"

"God of Heaven!" exclaimed Lieberg, starting forward. "Can't find her? Are there any signs of violence?"

"Oh, dear! Lord bless you, sir! they have murdered her!" exclaimed the cook, with her eyes as big as saucers, while the housemaid gaped behind, and Helen's maid appeared with the tears on her cheeks. "They have murdered her, and taken away the body to bury it, like a dead dog, in some field. I'll wager any money she saw them and screamed, and they cut her throat. They would have cut mine, too, if I had screamed, but I knew better."

"I declare I heard her scream in the night!" cried the housemaid; "but I thought it was only a screech owl."

"Get along, you fool," said the cook, in reply, "you heard nothing at all, not even yourself snoring."

"Let me pass!" said Lieberg, with his face as pale as death. "This must be seen to at once."

He was confronted, however, by Helen's maid, who said, wiping the tears from her eyes—"I don't think they have murdered my young lady, sir, for the shoes and the gown that she wore last night are gone, though everything else is left, even the combs for her hair. I think she must have seen them, too, and they must have made her go away with them for fear she should tell."

"Come with me—come with me!" cried Lieberg, and away he rushed to the room where Helen had inhabited. He found everything as the girl had described. There were no signs of any violence, but evident proof that Miss Barham had quitted the place suddenly, and but half-dressed. Nothing seemed to have been plundered, however; two rings which she had worn were on the dressing-table; and the picture of her grandfather, which she had spoken of to Mr. Carr on the preceding evening, lay beside them, having been apparently taken out of the lower part of a small dressing-case, on

which was inscribed—"To Helen Barham, from her affectionate Father." Her drawing-box was also on the table, and beside it, a sketch which she had been drawing. Signs of her mind were in everything about the room, and Lieberg gazed around it with sensations such as he had never experienced before. He felt that, for the first time he loved—passionately, strongly; and when he thought of the fair being who had so lately tenanted that chamber—whose spirit seemed to live in every object round him—of her grace, her loveliness, her bright mind, her glowing heart; of his own evil designs against her, and of her uncertain fate, of her being cast into the hands of ruffians, and left entirely to their will and disposal, he struck his hand against his brow, and then shook it wildly in the air.

The moment after he had done so, his eye rested upon the form of Mr. Carr, standing before him, with a bitter sneer upon his counte nance.

"And so," said the old man, evidently finding his revenge in Lieberg's agitation, "Mammon is a sweet little cherub—a sweet little cherub, with a purse in his hand; and Asteroth is a beautiful lady! Well, Count, you see, we have all our weaknesses, and I agree with you per-

fectly that we should paint Apollyon good-looking, though powerful. I do not know that you might not sit for the picture yourself."

"I will give five guineas to any man," exclaimed Lieberg, "who brings me a saddle-horse to the door in half an hour."

"I will—I will!" said Mr. Carr, "and give you credit for the sum, Count, for I believe they have taken your purse as well as mine."

"I have more that they did not find," answered Lieberg, abruptly. "Quick with the horse then, sir! Every minute is precious. Let my servant, when he returns, wait for me here. If I should not come till to-morrow, let him have his food, Mr. Carr! You shall be paid. I know the principles of your proceedings. Quick with the horse, I say!"

In less than a quarter of an hour the horse was brought round, and Lieberg was upon its back. He tracked the marks of wheels for a long way with the skill of a wild Indian, but at length they entered upon a high road where they were lost amongst other traces. Lieberg chose his direction after a moment's consideration, and then galloped on till he came to a large town.

CHAPTER IX.

It is not in the least my intention to keep the reader in suspense regarding the fate of Helen Barham, or, indeed, of any of the other personages in this book. It is a plain unvarnished tale, without mystery or secret in any part of it, narrating the events exactly as they occurred, and preparing no other surprises for the public, than precisely those which fate and fortune destined for the actors in the scene itself. We will, therefore, at once, with good leave and permission, return, in point of time, to the night preceding the attack upon Mr. Carr's house, and venture, in our ghostly capacity, into the bedchamber of sweet Helen Barham.

She was certainly as fair a being as ever was seen, and the great test of loveliness, which the

poet gave in his few masterly words, proved hers—that ornament made no addition to her charms; that dress added nothing, but rather took away, and that her beauty was assuredly, "when unadorned, adorned the most." She was indeed so lovely that eyes, not in general accustomed to contemplate or appreciate very great refinement, admired as much as those which fed upon rare flowers every day; and the girl whom Helen had brought from London with her, was almost as much her lover as if she had been a man.

Helen's toilet for the night, though always careful, was not long; and, it must be repeated, that in her bed-gown she was not a bit less lovely than in the richest robe that ever came from the hands of a Parisian artist. She had approached the side of her bed, to kneel down and pray to that God who had mingled most unexpected mercies with his chastisements, whom she had never forgotten in her misfortunes, and who had saved her from temptation to sin. She was about to kneel, then, when her maid, whom she had dismissed for the night some time before, re-entered the room, and said—"A little note from Count Lieberg, Miss Helen."

Helen turned round, perhaps somewhat impatiently, for her thoughts were full of other things—full of all the wants and wishes which she was about to express to the ear of God; and she asked, "What is it, Mary?—open it, and read it."

The girl obeyed, and taking the note to the light, read aloud the words which the reader has already heard. Helen returned to the table, and wrote her hasty reply beneath; and then dismissing the maid, knelt down and prayed. Amongst other petitions was the request that God would pardon, reform, and bless her brother; and her thoughts naturally ran on, after she had done, to his future fate, and to the hopes of fortune which Mr. Carr had held out. She could not help thinking that his having been prevented from proceeding on his voyage just at the time that such a discovery was likely to take place, seemed like an interposition of Providence. Such a train of thought induced her to take out of the lower part of her dressing-case the picture of her grandfather, and compare it with that of her father, which had belonged originally to her mother, and which, since her mother's death, she had constantly worn round her neck, night and day. The latter portrait

was an extremely small miniature in a gold case, surrounded by small brilliants; but it had been painted for her father in the times of his happiness and prosperity, by an artist who has not long been dead, but whose works are of high value still to all who possess them, and who was known in his own day by the name of Gentleman Shelley. His skilful hand had preserved the likeness in a size scarcely greater than that of a large ring, and in comparing the two pictures, the resemblance between the father and the son was extraordinary.

Helen gazed on them for several minutes; her memory ran back to the past, and to the last looks of that father who had been taken from her at an hour when a father's care was most needful. No one can wonder that her eyes filled with tears; but feeling that it was in vain to indulge such sorrow, she extinguished the light and retired to bed, with her own heart free from guile, though crime, in various shapes, was hovering round—crime of one kind destined, by the wisdom and mercy of God, to disappoint another.

She lay awake for some time, for from the bosom of Helen Barham had gone for ever that balmy peace which sheds the downy blessing on the eyes of childhood. Passion, the scarer

of slumber, had taken possession of her bosom, and the lids that not a year before used to drop at the first invitation of repose, now refused to shut out busy waking thought from the troubled brain. At length, however, weariness overcame her, and after a deep-drawn sigh, she fell into profound sleep.

How long it lasted she knew not, but when she woke, it was with a start. There was a light in the room which dazzled her eyes, and to her horror and consternation she beheld three men, dressed as we have described those who entered Lieberg's chamber, except that one had for the moment withdrawn the crape from his face, and was drinking a draught of cold water from a tumbler which she had left upon the table. All three were standing near the dressing-glass, and one was examining some of the little trinkets which she had laid down. Although they all seemed so peaceably disposed, Helen could not restrain the first impulse of terror, and uttered a scream, though it was rendered a faint one by an effort to repress it. The man whose face was uncovered, instantly drew the crape over it again, and darted towards her bedside with a crow-bar in his hand, exclaiming—"By —— she has seen me!"

Helen, overpowered by terror, could not utter a word, but clasped her hands in an attitude of supplication. She was so young, so beautiful, there was so much of the light and spirit of life about her, that it must have been a heart of stone indeed that could have struck her, as she there lay, in her innocence and her loveliness. The man paused suddenly, repeating—"She has seen me!" and then asked in a harsh and grating tone, "Did you not see me?"

Even then Helen would not tell a falsehood, and she murmured forth, "I did; but I will never, never say a word of it to any one."

The man continued gazing at her for a minute or more, in perfect silence, and then thrust the end of the crow-bar into his pocket, saying, "It's no use!—I can't do it! Look ye, my young lady, I know ye, your name is Barham—I have seen you with your brother. Now if I spare your life, and you help to take mine, damme if you're not a great deal worse than I am."

"I will never say one word against you, so help me Heaven!" exclaimed Helen.

At that moment one of the man's companions pulled him by the sleeve, and they had a quick

whispering conference together at the other side of the room.

"Very well," said the man who had ap proached her bedside, "that will do. You stay here at her door, on the outside, d'ye see, while Simes and I go to the other room.—Don't you do her any harm, mind ye, for I wont have her hurt. I know she's a good girl.—Come, ma'am, you must get up, and put on some things, and go with us. They don't choose to leave ye here. So now be quick. Don't be afraid; no harm shall happen to ye. I give you my honour I'll take care of ye, and nobody shall lay a finger on ye. If they do, I'll take care of them—that's all. Get up quick, there's a good girl," he added, in a softer tone, and all three left the room.

Astonished, surprised — scarcely knowing whether she was dead or alive—Helen lay for a moment ere she proceeded to execute the commands she had received. She then rose, though it was with terror and agitation, which scarcely left her power to dress herself, so terribly did her hands tremble and her knees shake under her. Her dress was still in sad disarray, when the man who was watching on the outside put his head in, exclaiming, "Be quick—be quick!

—we can't stay here all night. They'll soon have done."

But, as may well be supposed, his exhortations to speed only tended to agitate Helen more, and take from her the power of making haste. A minute after, another man appeared, who, by his voice, she recognised as the man whose face she had seen. "Come, come!" he exclaimed, "you must be quick."

She would fain have supplicated to be allowed to remain, but he caught her sharply by the hand, and led her along, saying, "Not a word, as you value your life."

With these words he led her down stairs, through the passages at the bottom of the house, and to the door leading out into the court. Another man who preceded them, darted away towards a room, which she knew to be Mr. Carr's, and returned in a minute, bearing a large and heavy load, and followed by a third similarly burdened. A fourth carried another large package, and as soon as they were all collected in the hall, they opened the door and issued forth, one of them pausing for a moment to lock the door behind them. Poor Helen, still grasped by the arm, was hurried along through the grass court, and down the road, which passed

before the house, to a spot at about a hundred yards distance, where they found a double-bodied phaeton, and two knavish-looking horses, which apparently had come some distance that morning. These animals had their forelegs tightly tied with handkerchiefs, so as to prevent them from moving; but the bandages being speedily taken off, the packages, which the men had brought, were placed in various parts of the carriage, and Helen, in a state scarcely to be described, was lifted into the vehicle.

The man who had hitherto shewn her some kindness, now took his place by her side, seized the reins with an experienced hand, and drove on, as fast as the horses would go, for the space of nearly two hours, only stopping for one single minute to let the poor animals breathe at the top of a hill. He shewed no hesitation as to which way he should turn, though one of the men—of whom there were three, crowded into the second body of the carriage—called out from time to time, "To the right, Harry—to the left!" as they approached any lane or road, up which it was necessary to go.

It seemed to Helen from the way in which they turned and returned, that they were making more than one circuit, in order to evade

pursuit; and such indeed was the case, for the spot which they at length reached was not, in a direct line, more than sixteen miles from Yelverly, and the round they had taken must have been at least twenty-four. Instead of slackening their pace, they quickened it towards the end of the journey, and entered a large smoky-looking town, just as the darkness of the night was beginning to turn grey with the light of the morning. There was nobody stirring in the streets, and they did not drive far into the town, stopping at a small public house on the left hand, almost immediately after they had entered. All was darkness in the aspect of the dwelling, but one of the men springing down, opened the door without knocking, and Helen was lifted out, by another, and taken into a small parlour, where she found a rushlight on the table, the faint twinkling of which shewed her, that the people who were with her had not yet taken the crape from off their faces. One of the two who had got out of the phaeton stayed in the room with her, without saying a word, while the other ran out, and returned with a candle, which he lighted at the rushlight; and then both quitted the

parlour, leaving Helen alone, and locking the door upon her.

Nearly half-an-hour passed without any one returning, and the poor girl remained shivering with terror, and with a sensation of cold all over her; although it was in the midst of summer, and the morning was in reality warm. No sounds stirred in the house—nothing gave any indication of its being inhabited; but at length the door was again opened, and a man appeared, in whom, though the crape was gone, and the smock-frock was thrown off, Helen recognised without difficulty, the man whose face she had seen in her room at Yelverly. He was a handsome, powerful, active-looking man, with a frank and bold, but somewhat stern countenance; and though his brow was frowning when he entered, yet, to say the truth, Helen felt more security in his presence, than probably she might have done in that of any of his companions.

She had been sitting upon a wooden chair, with her head resting upon her hands, but she started up as soon as the man entered, and gazed upon him as if enquiring her fate. The expression of apprehension upon her face seemed to move him, and his first words were—"Don't

be afraid, young lady; I told you nobody should do you any harm, and they shan't: so make your mind at ease on that score.—You can hurt nobody but me, and I'll take my chance."

"On my word," cried Helen—"on my honour, I will never say anything to injure you."

"Well, well, I believe you," he said; "and if you did think of peaching, I don't fancy you will, when I give you what I've got in my hand. Look here, Miss Barham; you know your brother's a d—d fool.—There, that paper might have hanged him—ay, and it was kept for the purpose of hanging him, too, by that bitter bad scamp, Lieberg, if he did not do what was wrong by you. So there, now, take it, and do what you like with it:" and he held out towards her the very bill that her brother had forged.

"Oh, no, no!" cried Helen, drawing back; "I do not know what to do with it."

"Not know what to do with it!" cried the man; "why, you foolish girl, I'll shew you then;" —and twisting it up in his fingers, he put it to the light. In a moment it blazed up, and the chief record of William Barham's guilt was at an end. Though Helen dared not do that act herself, yet her heart beat gladly when she saw it done, and starting forward with one of

her wild impulses of gratitude, she caught the man's hand, and pressed it to her lips.

"Nonsense, nonsense!—don't do that," he cried, actually colouring with a feeling of shame. "Look here! here's another paper I got out of that same pocket-book—a sort of confession that he made your brother sign, all for the sake of getting hold of you—I can't well wonder at it, after all. But then he should have gone honourably about it, and asked you yourself. However, we will serve this the same," and he set fire to it likewise, and threw it into the empty grate. "And now," continued he, "you're to stay here for an hour more, Miss Helen! After that, you may go where you please—back again if you like; but take my advice, and have nothing to do with that d—d rascal, Lieberg, for he's as bad a one as ever lived. He would have made your brother sell you, like a sheep, to save his neck; and that's not the way to get a woman's love, I'm sure."

"But how can I get back?" said Helen; "how can I get home?"

"Oh! easy enough," replied the man; "you have nothing to do, but to turn to the left out of the door, and walk straight up the street, till you come to the Tontine Inn, and the coach-

office; and so now remember, that whenever you see me again, you're not to know me from Adam."

"I have promised you most sincerely," said Helen, "and on my word I will keep that promise—you need not be in the least afraid."

"I am not—I am not," said the man; "there, give us your hand upon it. Stay here for an hour, and then go where you like."

Thus saying, he shook her hand heartily, and was turning to depart, but Helen stopped him, saying, timidly, "But am I safe here?"

"Perfectly," replied the man—"perfectly! Why bless your little heart, there's nobody in the house but yourself."

"But if the people to whom it belongs should come?" said Helen, "they may think—"

"Well, tell them how you were brought here," said the man; "in an hour you may say anything you please;" and he added, "we shall be far on the road into Scotland by that time, so don't forget your word, and good bye!"

Thus speaking, he quitted the room, and Helen stood watching the light, as it burnt slowly down in the candlestick.

CHAPTER X.

In an hour after the period at which we closed the last chapter, Helen Barham stood before a house, bearing the name of the Tontine Inn, in the town of Sheffield. It was now broad daylight, and there were a many artisans and people of the lower classes going about the streets on their various employments; but yet very few of the houses and shops that she had passed were open, it being barely half-past five o'clock in the morning. About the inn itself there was no appearance of wakefulness, and the coach-office was not to be seen.

Poor Helen Barham's heart sunk as she gazed up at the closed shutters and blank face of the tall house. She knew not where to go, or what to do; and had she recollected that her appear-

ance at that moment was certainly somewhat wild and strange—her hair dishevelled, her bonnet scarcely tied, without shawl or handkerchief, or gloves—she might have felt still more abashed and apprehensive than she did.

After pausing for several minutes, Helen wandered some way on, and then came back again, when, to her great satisfaction, she saw one of the drudging housemaids of the establishment sweeping out the passage. Helen approached her timidly, and asked which was the coach-office?

"Why, bless you, Miss!" replied the girl, "it wont be open these two hours; those lazy fellows are never in it much before eight o'clock. The early coach started an hour ago and more; and then Mr. Jones, who is the night clerk, goes away, and it's long enough before the others come."

"That is very unfortunate!" said Helen, "for I wanted to go to Yelverly as fast as possible."

"There's no coach, ma'am," answered the girl, "till ten o'clock. But hadn't you better step into the waiting-room, and remain there? What coach did you come by?"

"I came by none," replied Helen; "I was

brought here from Yelverly against my will, and want to get back, as soon as possible, to Mr. Carr's."

"Oh, what miser Carr's house!" said the girl. "I know that very well, for I was born at Bingley; and I know Miss Juliet very well, too, for she was kind to my poor dear mother before she died."

"She is a very dear and good friend of mine," answered Helen; "and I have been staying at Mr. Carr's for some time: but a party of men brought me away by force this morning."

The girl's wonder and compassion were both moved by Helen's short account of herself; and after a moment's thought, she said—"May be, you would not like to go into the waiting-room, where everybody can come in. Hadn't I better shew you into a private room, Miss? Some of the waiters will be up soon, and then you can get some breakfast."

Helen very willingly agreed to this proposal, and by the maid's assistance she was, in the space of half an hour, not only seated in a comfortable room in the inn, but had before her such tea and toast as the place could afford, and all that constitutes the inn idea of a breakfast. It must not be supposed that Helen forgot

her purse had been left behind her, and that she had no money with her; but she had busily turned in her own thoughts the situation in which she was placed, and had made up her mind as to the course she was to pursue, in order to pay both for her accommodation at the inn, and her place back to Yelverly.

The personage who attended upon the room where she sat, who brought her breakfast, and took away the things when she had done, could not exactly be called a dumb waiter, because he possessed at least two words, which were—"Yes, ma'am!" and once even, in a fit of Laputan abstraction, he replied to a question from Helen—"Yes sir!"—though, bless her, she looked as little like a gentleman as it is possible to conceive. From this personage, it may be easily supposed, Helen could get but very little information of any kind, either respecting the starting of the stages, or aught else; and, after having waited till she heard, by the chime of the clock, that the hour of the coach's departure would be the next that struck, she rang the bell, and asked the waiter if she could speak with the mistress of the house?

The waiter replied—"Yes, ma'am"—perhaps with the intention of informing his mis-

tress; but by this time, as I have hinted, it was nine o'clock: people were coming and going; much gossiping was taking place at the door of the house; bells were ringing, and a variety of calls, objurgations, screams, applications, and scoldings, were flying about the chambers and passages, fit to deafen the ears or distract the brain of any personage but Figaro or the waiter of an inn.

The consequence was, that, after waiting for about a quarter of an hour more, Helen again rang the bell, made the same demand, and received the same reply. "Pray do not fail," she added, in a gentle tone; and the man hastened away, determined to obey her behest, before he did anything else. In a minute after, a tall, fine-looking, stately dame, dressed in black silk, with an apron and cap as white as snow, notwithstanding the manifold globules of soot that float about in the air of Sheffield, entered the room, and asked the young lady, what was her pleasure, surveying her, at the same time, from head to foot, with some degree of curiosity.

Helen, by this time, had indeed done something at the looking-glass, to take away the wildness of her appearance; but still she was conscious of not being dressed with that care

which becomes a lady, and her situation altogether gave a timidity to her tone, as she replied—"I wished, madam, to ask a favour of you. The case is, simply, this: I have been spending some time at Mr. Carr's, at Yelverly; but I was brought away from that place last night by four men, perfect strangers to me, and against my will. All my money was left behind——"

The landlady uttered an ominous "Oh!" and pursed up her lips, with a very significant expression of countenance. But Helen hastened on to the principal point of her story, saying—"I desire to get back again to Yelverly, as fast as possible, and I have no means of doing so, but——"

"I never lend money to nobody, ma'am," said the landlady, tossing her head; "and I always expect people to pay for their breakfast when they order it." And as she thus spoke, she took a step towards the door, as if to consult with her excellent spouse upon ulterior proceedings. But Helen was made a little angry at the worthy lady's sharp selfishness; and she replied, in a tone of more firmness, and command—

"Stop a minute, madam, and be so good

as to hear me out, before you come to such rapid conclusions. I do not expect you to lend me money, or to trust me in any way, without some certainty of being paid. I have, luckily, one thing with me, which—though I have never parted with it for an hour, from the time I first had it till the present day—I must now give up for a time, till I can get to Yelverly, and send the money to you."

As she spoke, she unclasped the little gold chain that suspended her father's picture around her neck, and looked at the miniature for a moment, with a glistening eye. "This picture, madam," she continued, "is set in gold—those are brilliants round it, of no great value it is true, but more than enough to make you quite sure that you will not lose by trusting me with whatever may be the amount of my bill here, and with a sufficient sum to carry me to Yelverly. You will be good enough to give me a little memorandum of having received the picture; and as soon as I arrive at Mr. Carr's house, I will send back the money to redeem it."

The landlady's manner was altered in an extraordinary degree, as she looked at the miniature, and saw that it was set round with a row of small diamonds, intrinsically worth, perhaps,

seven or eight guineas. "I will speak to my husband, ma'am," she said. "Indeed, I did not mean to say anything——"

Helen bowed her head gently, replying—"There is no need of any apology. It is very natural that you should not trust a mere stranger. Speak to your husband by all means; shew him the picture, and tell him what I say. Indeed, if he likes to send some one with me to Yelverly, I shall greatly prefer it. Then he can have the money at once, and I will pay his messenger."

"Oh dear, no, ma'am, there's no occasion for that, I'm sure," cried the landlady; "he'll be quite satisfied, I'm certain. I'll be back in a minute, ma'am," and away she went to tell her husband all about the nice young lady in No. 5, whom ten minutes before she had set down for a swindler and a reprobate.

When she came into the bar, however, she found her husband speaking busily with a gentleman whose whole attire was dusty, as if from long travelling.

"No, sir, no," said the landlord; "I have heard nothing of the kind—Lord have mercy! you had better go to the magistrates. What do you think, my dear? They have broken into Mr.

Carr's house, at Yelverly, and carried off every thing out of the place."

"Then I'll bet any money," cried the land lady, "that this here picture is a part of the stolen goods.—But no, that can't be it, neither; for the young lady wants to go back again."

"What young lady?—What picture?" cried Lieberg eagerly, for he it was. "Let me look at it!"

"Why, sir," rejoined the landlady, handing it to him, "the young lady says she was carried away by force by four men against her will. To say the truth, I did not believe it at first ——"

"Then you were a fool for your pains!" thundered Lieberg. "It is Miss Barham! Where is she? Poor girl, what she must have suffered!" and Lieberg, who without scruple would have wrung her heart, and condemned her to a life of regret and remorse, did, nevertheless, feel sincere compassion for Helen Barham under sufferings not a thousandth part so intense.

The landlady, however, who did not at all like being called a fool in the presence of her husband and her waiter, determined to stand up for Helen Barham's dignity, now that she was

thoroughly convinced that the young lady was what she professed to be; and to Lieberg's repeated question of "Where is she?" she replied, "I must first ask the lady, sir, whether she desires to see you. What name shall I tell her?"

"Colonel Lieberg," he exclaimed, sharply. "But, as there is no doubt about her seeing me, I shall accompany you."

The landlady led the way to No. 5, and opened the door sufficiently wide to admit her own portly person, but not to let Lieberg pass, saying, at the same time, "Madam, if your name is Miss Barham, here is a gentleman, who calls himself Colonel Lieberg, wishing to see you."

In an instant the warnings of the housebreaker came back to Helen's recollection, but more powerfully still the words of Morley Ernstein. Her countenance spoke at once plainly that her visitor was not one whom she most eagerly desired to see, but, ere she could reply, Lieberg pushed the door impetuously out of the landlady's hand, and, passing by her, advanced at once towards Helen.

"Dear Miss Barham," he cried—"we have almost been in despair about you. This is, indeed, joyful to have found you so soon. I

have been galloping about the country these last three hours in search of you."

There was so much real joy and satisfaction in his whole look, that Helen could not refuse to give him her hand; and the landlady having shut the door, Lieberg, in the excitement of the moment, pressed his lips upon it, resolved to hazard everything at what he believed to be a favourable opportunity.

Helen would have drawn away her hand instantly, but he held it firmly, and led her to her seat, saying—"Oh, Helen, what have I suffered on your account this night!"

Helen coloured and trembled, feeling that a moment of trial was approaching. She replied gravely, however—"I am extremely sorry that you should have been put to any pain on my account; but as the stage will soon be departing for Yelverly, I must settle with the people here, and take my place."

"Nay, nay, Helen," said Lieberg, "you must first listen to me for a moment."

Helen turned very pale; but he continued, eagerly, though in that bland, persuasive tone which he knew well how to use, his voice assuming the softest modulations, his brow cleared of every thing that was stern and dark, his magnificent features glowing with animation, but full

of gentleness and entreaty, his eyes beaming like stars in a dark night, but with a subdued and gentle light.

"Helen," he said, "dear Helen, you must know, you cannot but know, since last night, that I love you; deeply, passionately, tenderly; with an ardour, strength, a profoundness that I never felt before towards any woman. I know not what it is, or how, but you have fascinated me—enchanted me. That song which you sang last night seemed to waken in my heart feelings that had slept for years—those early dreams of love and ecstatic joy with one adored being, separate from all the rest of earth, bound to her by none of the cold worldly ties that unite the dull earthly insects which crawl about the world and call themselves society, but united to her by the bond of strong affection—of passion, powerful, overpowering, everlasting, indestructible—of passion, neither to be changed by the world's cold maxims, nor restrained by idle ceremonies or empty laws. Oh, Helen, listen to me! Turn not away your head—let not your cheek grow pale as if you thought I wished to deceive or to wrong you, for I am yours altogether, and you shall dictate anything to me that you please. You shall command

me in all respects; I will be your slave, the creature of your will. I, who never bowed my head to human being—who never found any to resist or to control me—I will take my law from your lips, and do in all things as you would have me!—Only, only, do one thing. There are circumstances which I cannot explain now, for want of time, but which shall be entirely made clear to you as we go. Only, I beseech you, let me order horses, and go with me at once to London and to your brother. I would fain have you, too, go on with me to the Continent; but you shall stay in London if it please you better. All I have is at your command, myself, my fortune, my life itself; and you shall always dictate to me every thing that you would have done, and it shall be done at once. Helen, dear Helen, come with me! True passion bears no cold delay, and a rapid resolution, taken in a moment like this, when love speaks out, when opportunity presents itself and there is nothing to oppose, often goes on to happiness the most intense, the most durable, when, if we lose the instant, we give ourselves up to grief for our whole lives. Nay, shrink not from my arms, beloved—for once let me clasp you to a bosom that burns for you alone."

Helen did shrink from him, however, farther and farther, as with increasing energy and vehemence, with his eyes lighting up, his words rushing rapidly from his lips in a thousand varied intonations, and his whole spirit moved by the strong feelings within him, he poured forth his passionate solicitations. She shrunk from him, I say, farther and farther, with the small, finely cut ear glowing with the scarlet blood, her cheek as pale as death, her lip quivering, her eye fixed upon her suitor, in terror, surprise, and horror. She could hardly speak. But however Lieberg veiled his purposes under vague, though glowing language, warned as she had been, she understood him only too well, and saw that all which had been told her was true.

Her lips moved for a moment without uttering a sound, but at length she murmured, "Monster!" —and turned to ring the bell.

Lieberg, however, caught her hand and stopped her, and she stood gazing at him with such a look of horror and pain as, in the moment of the great temptation, the mother of mankind might have worn, had some angel whispered the real nature of the being to whom she listened, and displayed to her mind's eye

the endless misery, through unnumbered generations, that was to follow on man's fall."

"Beware!" said Lieberg, at length, as he marked that look and read it aright; and his tongue, while he spoke, lost its poisonous melody, his face its fascinating smile—"beware what you do! Remember, Helen Barham, that you are in my power. The moment is now before you to choose between my love and my hate. Be mine, and I swear by all that I hold sacred, such a life of joy and love shall be yours as even your fancy could never dream; but if you reject all that I offer, recollect that your brother's fate is in my hands, his life, his shame, ay—and your own fate, too—that reputation of which you may be idly vain. Disappoint me now, and men shall laugh, and say that she was Count Lieberg's paramour; but that he tired of her, and cast her off in a single day. Your fate, I say, as well as his, is in my hands."

"Mine, mine!" cried Helen, with astonishment and terror. "Mine in your hands? What is it that you mean?"

"Nay, nay," said Lieberg, softening his tone again, "though what I say is true, think not of it. I meant but to shew you what was in

my power, Helen. I have not thought of using that power. To wring or pain your heart would pain my own, dear girl. Forgive me for what I have said—think that it was but the mad vehemence of passion. Oh, feel for me, Helen! —you that seem made for love and joy, feel for the intense, the burning love you have inspired. Think not that I would hurt your brother. On the contrary, I have tended him with kindness and care, when there was no one to tend him but myself. I have furnished him with all that was needful for his happiness, and it is his first wish and desire you should be mine. My vehemence has frightened and surprised you, I see; but you know not what it is I feel. Sit down again, dear girl, and listen to me—listen to me but for a moment ——."

"No, Count Lieberg," she replied, firmly, "I will not! I will neither sit down nor listen to you at all, but upon one subject. I can easily conceive that you suppose my brother's fate entirely in your hands; but, thank God, my reputation is not; and I believe you speak a falsehood when you say that you can make even the general world, much less those that love and esteem me, believe that I ever was the paramour of a man whom I hate and despise. I

believe, sir, that you have told a gross falsehood, for the same base purpose for which you have threatened a brother's life to the ears of his sister."

The look of Helen Barham had changed under the emotions that she felt. Instead of fear, and timidity, and horror, it bore now the look of indignant pride. Her head was raised high, her beautiful nostril expanded, her bright eyes flashed, and Lieberg, though all these signs of anger were displayed against himself, felt passion but the stronger in his heart.

"Nay, nay, Helen," he said, in a quick, but half sportive tone, "if you so dare me, dear lady, I must shew that I threaten not without power. Look at these few words of written invitation, in Helen Barham's hand! Sent to me by my own valet last night, after all the household were in bed—'*Whenever you like.—Helen Barham!*'"

To Lieberg's surprise, the horror and detestation which became the predominant expression of Helen's countenance, was unmingled with anything like fear.

"You are a fiend, indeed!" she cried. "You are a fiend, indeed! But, like the machinations of all other fiends, your devices are controlled

by the good will of God! When the note that you wrote to me last night, and which you have torn off from the answer, was brought to me, know that I was not alone. It was read by another to me—by one who can swear to every word of it. Thus I set you at nought, scorning you, as well as hating you, feeling as much disgust as horror at your conduct. Let me tell you more, Count Lieberg, that, were there no other man on earth, I would regard you with the same contempt that I do now; that you are personally odious to me; and that were you at my feet to-morrow, with proposals as high and pure, as those of to-day are base and infamous, though I were a beggar in the streets, seeking my bread from door to door, I would spurn you from me, with the same scorn that I do now," and passing him boldly, she rang the bell.

The moment that Helen's hand had left the bell rope, the stately old landlady burst into the room, with her face all in a glow.

"You shan't be injured, or insulted, in my house, ma'am," she said. "I beg your pardon for listening, ma'am, but I thought you might want a little help from what I saw. The gentleman may take himself where he likes, but he shan't affront you any more here."

Helen burst into tears at this unexpected support; and the good woman, who really, except in money matters, deserved that name, held out her arms towards the agitated and beautiful being before her, saying, in the tone of a mother—

"Come here to me, my dear! You are a good, virtuous girl, and deserve to be taken care of. The coach will go in a quarter of an hour, and my son, Will, shall go with you on the top, to see that no harm comes to you. There's the picture, my dear—we don't want it; and as for the gentleman, he had better budge, for if my husband had heard all that I have heard, he would have leathered his jacket."

Lieberg gazed at her for a moment, with a look of calm scorn, for his self-possession had been restored in a moment.

"My good woman," he said, "you are a very foolish person; and, if you meddle in this way, with things that don't concern you, you will burn your fingers some day. Miss Barham, we shall meet again, when you will think differently."

"Never!" said Helen; and Lieberg, without more reply, quitted the room, and ordered his horse over to the other inn.

"Feed him," he said, to the hostler who took

him, "and bring him round as soon as he is ready."

He then called for a private room, and buried his eyes in his hands till the sound of a coach setting out from the office opposite made him look up. Then biting his lip, without any other gesticulation, he muttered—"Curses upon it all!"

CHAPTER XI.

In passing through life we must have remarked, not only that the satirical maxim of Rochefaucault is true, with a great number of people, in regard to the pleasures that they derive from the misfortunes of their friends, but that the general world contrives to extract an infinite quantity of amusement, delight, and satisfaction from all the evils that are going on throughout the universe. What a fund of pleasant excitement is there to the minds of many, in that column of a newspaper, headed "Accidents and Offences." What gratification to multitudes in a child being scalded to death, a house being burnt down, a retired tradesman, in a solitary cottage, undergoing the process of murder! And such is the joy and delight the great mass of mankind feels in crime and sorrow, that I do really believe,

if any person could invent an unheard-of iniquity, or contrive to die some unknown kind of death, not only would rags of his clothes be kept as relics, locks of his hair preserved in lockets, or the rope that hanged him be sold at a guinea an inch, but a very handsome subscription might be gathered, to raise a statue to him, as the man who furnished the public with a new kind of excitement.

Fie upon it! The morbid taste for stimulating things, that habitual drunkenness of the mind, which is increasing day by day more and more throughout the whole world, excluding the sane, the simple, and the just, must end in moral death—the sad, worn-out, apathetic death of the spirit drinker. On my life, I have a great inclination to shake hands with Father Mathew, and preach a mental teetotalism!

The prevailing spirit, the love of excitement, which is in every human being, was not wanting even amongst the quiet fields and villages around Yelverly; and the news of that famous burglary having spread far and wide, the retired house of Mr. Carr became an object of attention and visitation, for all the places in the neighbourhood. Magistrates flocked in, farmers and yeomen made their appearance, constables, from every

place in the vicinity, travelled thither without loss of time; and though many a one winked the eye and laughed at Old Carr's misfortune, the general pleasure derived by the multitude from an extensive robbery in that part of the country was of the higher and more interesting kind, called excitement.

The retired lawyer, himself, as his first step, shut up his house, and would let no one in but those whom he knew; and, after he had collected his thoughts in some degree, he visited various parts of the building, opened different drawers and secret cupboards, and found, to his great relief, that the robbers, from their ignorance of his habits, had missed many of the stores which he had fancied carried off. He then gathered together his papers, which were scattered about his room, examined the marks and memorandums upon them, and, to his great joy, perceived that they were all correct. Another thing tended to relieve him from a still greater portion of the load of care, which was, that the plunderers, with a fine apprehension of detection, had displayed a goodly contempt for bank-notes, so that two packets, amounting each to five hundred pounds, were found cast down upon the floor without the slightest sign of veneration.

In the midst of these operations, several ma-

gistrates poured in upon him, and all the local wisdom of the neighbourhood was expended during the next three hours, in consulting and considering what was to be done. As will ever be the case where there are manifold persons, each of whom has as much right to speak as another, a great deal of nonsense was talked, and a great deal of time was expended to very little purpose.

The abduction of poor Helen Barham formed one of the principal topics with the magistrates; and Mr. Carr himself expressed much greater anxiety upon the subject than he had ever been known to evince in regard to anybody except his daughter. By the time that the premises had been thoroughly examined, the means by which the robbers had obtained an entrance clearly ascertained, and the route that they had taken in their escape rendered as confused and puzzled as possible, by conflicting testimonies and innumerable conjectures, Count Lieberg's servant had returned from Doncaster, bringing information from some of the magistrates of that place, that three persons of very suspicious look, and one of whom was known to be an infamous character, had appeared in that town on the preceding day, and had suddenly disappeared towards night. All attention was now

turned towards Doncaster, every man who thought himself an active magistrate, or who wished to establish for himself such a reputation, set off instantly for that town, while the rest retired to their own houses, satisfied with having talked much and done nothing at all, as is too much the case with county justices and with members of parliament.

When they were all gone beyond recall, and Mr. Carr was left alone, the real track of the plunderers, as so generally happens, was discovered at once by no other event than the passing of the Sheffield coach, and the arrival of Helen Barham. Mr. Carr was really delighted to see her, both because she had proved a pleasant companion to him, and because in the prospect of managing her own and her brother's affairs, he foresaw, or thought he foresaw, the means of recovering, and more than recovering, the riches which the house-breakers had carried away.

Many and eager were his questions, to all of which Helen gave a sincere answer, telling exactly what had occurred, with the exception of those points which referred to her brother William. She related how she had seen the man's face in her bed-room; how she had been forced to rise and accompany the robbers; how

she had pledged herself most solemnly never to give evidence against the man at whose intercession her life was spared; and how she had taken refuge at the Tontine Inn, and come thence by the stage to Yelverly. She would willingly have ended her history there, but Mr. Carr asked, as soon as she paused, if Colonel Lieberg, then, had not found her?

"I regret to say he did, my dear sir," replied Helen, with much agitation; "he found me alone and unprotected, and took that opportunity, when I most needed comfort and help, to insult and grieve me. Had it not been for the kindness of the people of the inn, I do not know what I should have done. I trust," she added, with the tears in her eyes, "that he will not return here while I remain. If he have any feeling of honour or shame left he certainly will not."

"But the manors! my dear Miss Barham—the manors!" cried Mr. Carr; "what can be done about the manors? Oh, he certainly must return here, for he has left his carriage and his servant."

"Then if he does," said Helen, "by your permission, my dear sir, I will remain in my own room till he is gone, and will not see him on any account whatsoever."

"Oh, quite right—quite right, my dear Miss Helen," replied Mr. Carr; "the foolish fellow doubtless thought you poor and friendless; but he will find himself mistaken; and when he sees you with seventy or eighty thousand pounds, or, may be, with a hundred—for I have not calculated what the arrears will be, and, indeed, cannot, till we enter into the accounts fully—he will change his tone, I am sure."

Helen smiled sadly, for, notwithstanding the belief, which had gained a strong hold of her, that there might be some truth in what Mr. Carr said regarding the claims of her family to greater fortune than they possessed, she could not help looking upon his expectation of recovering it as a mere dream.

"If he were to alter his tone," she replied, "I should certainly never alter mine. But I will go now, Mr. Carr, and write at once to my brother. I have many important things to tell him."

"Bid him come down here, with all speed," exclaimed Mr. Carr—"bid him come down here, with all speed. He will soon recover his health here, and if he do not, you will do quite as well; the entail was in the female line, as well as the male, and, indeed——"

"But I thought you proposed, Mr. Carr,"

said Helen, "to accompany me to London. I know that it is too late to-day, and, indeed, I feel too faint and weak to undertake such a journey without repose; but I did hope that you might be able to go to-morrow, for I only intended to write to my brother to comfort him in the meantime. You heard what that miserable man said about his state of health."

"Oh, he exaggerated—he exaggerated!" answered Mr. Carr. "Don't you see, he had an object to gain? But, however, I will go up, if you like it; and, indeed, perhaps it would be the best way. Then we could settle all things with your brother speedily, and I could set the Bow-street fellows upon the track of these villains who have carried off so much of my property. You say very right, my dear, it will be the best way, and we will go to-morrow—that is, if you be well enough, for we must not risk your life too. You must take care of yourself—you must take care of yourself, my little lady, for you will be a rich dame some of these days, and life becomes well worth preserving, when people have plenty of money."

Helen gazed down upon the ground, and her eyes filled with tears, but she merely replied—"A little repose is all that I require—I shall

be quite able to set out to-morrow; but now I will go and write to my brother, and pay the young man from the inn at Sheffield, who is waiting in the kitchen, I fancy."

"Ay, do, my dear Miss Barham—do," said Mr. Carr. "I would offer to pay him, but, really, these men have taken all the money I have got."

"That would be quite unnecessary," replied Helen; "I do not think they took anything from my room, and I have, luckily, plenty of money in my desk."

"Plenty?" said Mr. Carr, with a smile. "Never think you have plenty, my dear Miss Barham; you will always find more than enough to do with it, if you had twenty times as much."

Helen made no reply, but retired to her chamber as she had said, and after having paid the boy from Sheffield, wrote a long letter to her brother, and another to Juliet Carr. To the first she told all that had taken place between herself and Mr. Carr, regarding the fortune which he said was unjustly withheld from them. She entered into the whole of her own recollections, and the facts which induced her to believe that there was some ground for the statements of the old lawyer, and at the

same time she informed her brother of her approaching return to London. The most important intelligence of the whole, however, was conveyed in a postscript of a few words, to the following effect:—"You need no longer be under any apprehension regarding the consequences of an act that you lately committed, which you once told me of. Both the papers were destroyed before my own eyes, by a man who seemed to know something of you, and who had obtained possession of them in the commission of another crime."

The letter to Juliet was upon other topics, though she noticed briefly all that had occurred at Yelverly, and stated that she was about to return to London, accompanied by Mr. Carr. In the end of the letter she said—"Count Lieberg has been here, and has justified too sadly the opinion which Sir Morley Ernstein and Lady Malcolm entertained of him. He has insulted me cruelly, dear Juliet; and, I do not know why, but since I have had your friendship, and the support and protection of one who is, I know, very dear to you, my spirit has risen, even in spite of much sadness; and those insults which, a few weeks ago, I looked upon as a part of my fate, a misery that I was born to

endure, I now feel angry and indignant at, and my heart burns within me. It seems as if being admitted to call myself your friend, has given me back a dignity of feeling that misery and friendlessness had before taken from me. The poor teacher of music and of drawing, who could hardly gain enough, by her utmost labour, to keep herself and her brother from absolute want, seemed to consider herself, as well as to be considered by others, as merely a being to be pursued by the wicked and licentious, and with no other task before her, than to struggle and resist, till age came to relieve her from any share of attractions, without feeling the least anger or surprise at views and proposals the most degrading. Now, however, it is different, and I feel the insult that this man has offered me to the very heart. Nevertheless, my dear Juliet, you must, on no account, mention this to Sir Morley Ernstein; we both know his noble and his generous nature too well to doubt that it might, and very probably would, produce a quarrel between him and the other, which might end fatally. Just in the proportion as I am unprotected, poor, and without any claim to the generosity and friendship of any one, would he think himself called upon to resent an injury

and an evil inflicted upon her to whom he has shewn so much disinterested kindness. I tell it to you, because I will conceal nothing from you; but you must on no account let him hear one word of what I have said, as you value your own peace, and as you value mine."

Before Helen had concluded her letter to Juliet Carr, she received a message from the old lawyer, informing her that Count Lieberg had sent somebody from Sheffield with post horses, to bring away his carriage and servant, as he did not intend to take the manors or return to Yelverly; and about half an hour after she was summoned to the drawing-room to speak with two of the magistrates, who had been recalled by Mr. Carr. Their object was, of course, to ascertain in what direction the housebreakers had fled, and by what signs they could be recognised. In regard to the first point, Helen made a clear statement of what had taken place, and repeated what the man, Harry Martin, had said, respecting their soon being safe in Scotland, without at all imagining that these words had been spoken for the express purpose of misleading; but the information that she could or would give in order to identify the plunderers was very small. She described the

phaeton generally, but as to the colour, or any other distinctive mark, she could say nothing, having only seen it in the night, and being too much agitated and frightened to take any great notice of it then. The forms and features of the men had been so thoroughly concealed by the smock frocks which they wore, and the crape which was drawn over their faces, that Helen said truly, she could tell nothing regarding them in general by which they could be distinguished from any other men.

"But," exclaimed one of the magistrates, "you saw one of them, Miss Barham! Let us have an account of him, at least. It very often happens that one being known, his accomplices are speedily traced."

"But I told you, sir," replied Helen, apparently with some surprise at the request, "I told you that I had promised most positively never to say anything by which he could be recognised."

"But of course," cried the magistrate, "you do not intend to regard such a promise as binding!"

"As much as any other promise I ever made," answered Helen; "he might have taken my life if he had liked it, and——"

"But listen to me, my dear young lady," said the other magistrate, "promises made under threats and intimidation are always held to be invalid. Neither law, religion, nor justice, recognise them for a moment."

"I really do not know," replied Helen—"I am no great casuist in such matters. The man did not threaten me in the least degree, but he might have taken my life if he had thought fit. If he had done so, the law would have assigned to him no worse punishment than for breaking into the house; and on no consideration whatsoever will I give the slightest indication by which he may be discovered."

The magistrates then took another turn, and tried to alarm her, saying, they had power to compel her to answer their questions, that she might be treated as an accessory after the fact. Helen, however, turned to Mr. Carr, asking—"Do you suffer this, sir? You are a magistrate also, I think, and I must know if you wish me to be treated in this manner."

"No, no, my dear young lady," said Mr. Carr, moved by very different feelings from those which either Helen or the magistrates attributed to him, and, in fact, looking upon her already as the heiress which he presumed her to

be. "No, no, my dear young lady, this shall not be done. Gentlemen, Miss Barham must either be persuaded by fair means, or must be silent at her will. I cannot have her bullied."

The two magistrates seemed somewhat offended at the term which Mr. Carr employed; but the ci-devant lawyer was quite chivalrous in defence of his young friend, quoted all sorts of law to prove that his brethren of the bench were perfectly in the wrong, overwhelmed them with a multitude of obsolete terms, and would hear no argument in reply whatsoever. The two magistrates took up their hats, mortified and annoyed, and, with the dogged stalk of two British mastiffs, marched out of the room and the house, saying, "that Mr. Carr might manage the affair as he liked best himself."

"I will tell you how I will manage it, my dear Miss Barham," he said. "I will put two of the Bow Street runners on the track, and promise them a per centage on every ounce of gold and silver they recover. Much better is it for me to lose a little and get back the money, than to pay a great sum and hang them all. These county magistrates, with one thing or another, would let them go on till all the money was spent, and all the plate melted; but the Bow

Street officers will take care of that, if they hope to have a share; and so we will set out for London to-morrow without fail."

The good gentleman's purpose was executed, and he and Helen proceeded to Doncaster, and thence to London, without pause or delay. Mr. Carr himself had a strong objection to inns and hotels, and he consequently drove at once to Lady Malcolm's house, having a sort of claim to the hospitality of that lady, as his wife's first cousin, which he did not fail to put forward on all occasions when he visited London. To his surprise, and that of Helen's, however, a maid-servant opened the door, and informed Mr. Carr that her lady, Miss Juliet, and Sir Morley Ernstein, had gone down together to spend a few days at the little watering-place called Sandgate.

Helen remarked that there was something in this intelligence which made a scowl, such as she had seldom or ever seen there before, come upon the face of Mr. Carr.

"Gone down to Sandgate with Sir Morley Ernstein?" he exclaimed, swearing a desperate oath at the same time. "That is strange enough!"

"Oh, but she will be up in a day or two, sir," replied the maid, who knew Mr. Carr

quite well, and attributed his anger to a wrong cause; "and I am sure she will be delighted if you will stay here till she comes; for she always said that a bed was to be ready for you—and Miss Helen, too, I am sure she will be glad to see. I hope you are well, ma'am, and have passed a pleasant time in the country, though you look a little tired like—but I'll go and call the housekeeper."

That functionary accordingly appeared, and confirmed all the maid had said; and though Helen had some hesitation as to remaining at Lady Malcolm's house without an invitation from its mistress, yet the assurances of the housekeeper, who knew her lady well, were so strong, and Mr. Carr insisted so vehemently, that she yielded, and took up her abode in the little room which she had tenanted before, close to that of Juliet Carr.

No sooner was Mr. Carr installed, than he wrote a note of the most pressing kind to his daughter, telling her that he had come to London on business of great moment, and begging her to return instantly to meet him in the capital. He entered into no explanations of his views whatsoever, but requested Juliet, as probably it would be inconvenient for Lady Malcolm to come up with her, not to make any

delay on that account, but to set out at once, immediately after receiving this letter.

This being done, and having taken some refreshment, he proceeded at once to the house which Helen had formerly inhabited, where her brother William, who had received her letter in the morning, was waiting in a state of excitement of joy and astonishment impossible to describe. Helen, who accompanied Mr. Carr, remarked one thing, however, which made her fear that her brother had once more fallen amongst bad associates; he was extremely anxious to go into the country, vowed that though Lieberg was a liar, as he termed broadly it, and he had never been seriously ill at all, it would do his health good to be away from London; and added, that if Helen had only given him time, he would have come down to her in the country, without giving her the trouble of coming up to him.

Like all weak persons, William Barham was ever ready to attach himself to any one who would flatter his hopes or his wishes, hating unpalatable truth of all kinds, almost as much when it regarded his own situation, as when it affected his own conduct. With Mr. Carr he was delighted, vowed that he was a very

honest fellow—that he would put himself entirely in his hands—and that there could be no earthly doubt that he was quite right in regard to the view he took of the case. Thus, after a long conversation, they parted, and Mr. Carr returned with Helen to Lady Malcolm's house, enjoying the idea of having so soft a person to deal with, almost as much as if he had still been a solicitor in full practice.

Helen, however, was sad and dispirited, and felt that the tone of her brother's conversation altogether was painful and distressing. Some time had now elapsed since she had seen him; the effect of the country on her mind had been calm and refreshing; and all that was dark and bad, all that was weak and foolish in the character of her brother, seemed to stand out the more prominently from the state of her own mind. When we wish to see an object distinctly through a glass, we take care to wipe it clean from all specks and dust; and there is nothing that clears the mental vision so much of all the dark and dimming things of earthly life, as calm communion with the spirit of God's works in scenes where man's handy-work has wrought but little.

CHAPTER XII.

In looking at one of the finest and most sunshiny pictures of Claude de Lorraine, and in marking the calm and gentle brightness which his pictures generally display, it has often struck me that they afforded a fine image of happiness—of that pure dreamy happiness which is sometimes the portion of youth. The calm, refreshing shades in the foreground—shades produced not by clouds or by storms, or by the proximity of night, but by some sweet object softening the light, and mitigating the heat—the immense boundless distance, blending into the blue sky, Earth losing itself in Heaven—the prospect embracing every sort of object that can enchant the eye, fields, and plains, and hills, and woods, and villages, bridges, and streams,

and lakes, in gay confusion, and ruined temples waking sweet associations of the past, and man's living habitations giving the idea of dear domestic peace, each catching the bright sunshine, and each beautiful, though vague—the poet-painter surely intended all this as the symbol of a happy dream, where present enjoyment is calm though full, and every object of desire and hope is stretched out before the future, and lighted by the sun of youth and fancy, till the remote end mingles with heaven itself.

The three days that Morley Ernstein and Juliet Carr had passed at Sandgate, had been, like one of those pictures of Claude Lorraine, all brightness, all hope. There seemed not to be a cloud in the whole sky; but those sweet days of happiness are often like the glowing mornings of tropical climes, where, in the midst of a heaven previously without spot, a small, dark cloud appears, no bigger than a man's hand, and ere many hours are over, the hurricane sweeps past, and all is destruction, desolation, and sorrow.

The fourth day broke as brightly as any of the former, and Morley Ernstein, who, for propriety's sake—or for the sake of that which a corrupted state of society believes to be propriety—had been driven by Lady Malcolm to

sleep at another house, came in to breakfast as usual, and to arrange with her he loved some pleasant scheme for the passing of the coming hours. They had sat up late on the preceding night, enjoying the balmy summer air, as it swept over the sea, and Juliet had not yet quitted her room. At the place where she usually sat, however, had been laid down a letter, and Lady Malcolm, who entered the room first, wondered from whom it could come. Juliet herself soon appeared, and, without noticing the epistle, talked to Morley for some time, upon all those things which first interest lovers when they meet, and might have gone on still longer, had not Lady Malcolm—who was at an age when small matters are great, and who, moreover, had always been gifted with that peculiar sort of irritability which never suffers one to rest till the inside of a letter has been seen—insisted upon Juliet opening hers, though Juliet had said before that it was from her father, and was only that which he wrote her every week.

To please her cousin, however, she broke the seal; but poor Juliet's countenance underwent a sad change as she read the few lines that it contained, and her voice faltered sadly, as she said—

"My father is in London; he has come up in great haste about various matters, and requires my presence immediately, without a moment's delay. He refers me to a letter from Helen, which I have never received, and speaks of Yelverly having been broken into by robbers. I am afraid I must go directly, Harriet."

As one may suppose every thing was soon in confusion. Lady Malcolm read the letter, and saw that it was imperative. Juliet wished to go alone, but her cousin would not hear of such a thing, and said she was quite ready to return to London: Morley Ernstein professed himself rejoiced that Mr. Carr had come to town, and spoke a few words for Juliet's ear alone, which made the blood mount into her cheek. Lady Malcolm did not seem so well contented, however, and after breakfast she and Juliet consulted together, sending Morley to see that everything was ready for their immediate departure. In five minutes after, however, Lady Malcolm despatched her maid to call him back again, and when he entered the little sitting-room of the inn, he found that good lady standing ready to speak with him, and bearing very much the air of one who has something unpleasant to communicate, and does not well know how to do it.

"My dear Morley," she said, "I have just been talking to Juliet about you and her father; for on hearing that he had come suddenly to town, I began to be in a fright lest something unpleasant might take place, if he saw you at once as the acknowledged lover of his daughter, before he is a little prepared——"

"But, why—why?" demanded Morley, with some surprise. "If he had not come, I should have gone down, as soon as Juliet herself left town, to ask her hand at once. She is well aware that such was my intention. Why should anything unpleasant happen, my dear lady?"

"That is what I was explaining to Juliet," said Lady Malcolm. "A long time ago, there was a sad quarrel between your father and Mr. Carr—all about me, too, unfortunately—and though the thing is passed by and gone, my dear Morley, yet I think it would be very much better if you would let us go up first, and follow to-morrow, when I have seen Mr. Carr, and explained the whole matter to him. Now do not look sad and discomposed; it is only a precaution, but, depend upon it, it is a wise one. He is an irritable, and a passionate man, Mr. Carr, and, in the haste of the moment, he might say something which he would

never retract. But as I will manage it, all will go right, depend upon it."

"But what says Juliet?" demanded Morley, while that small dark cloud which we have spoken of as announcing the tempests of tropical skies, now first appeared upon the horizon of his own happiness. "What says Juliet, Lady Malcolm? I would fain speak with her. You alarm and surprise me."

Lady Malcolm immediately called Juliet from her room; but she came in with so cheerful a countenance, that the fears which had suddenly taken possession of Morley's heart, disappeared before its sunshine.

"What is this, Juliet," he asked, "that Lady Malcolm tells me? It seems," he continued, "that she and you have determined to cut me off from a day's happiness, dear Juliet; and wish me to stay here till you have seen your father?"

"You are not angry with me for wishing it?" said Juliet, giving him her hand, for he had spoken in a tone of vexation. "If you are, you shall come, Morley. But I thought what dear Lady Malcolm proposed was much better. She has explained to me the cause of my father's crossness on that day when first we met you, which I never knew before. But I am sure that

if we have an opportunity of speaking with him calmly and quietly, he will not oppose us in any degree. He never does thwart me, and the only danger lies in taking him by surprise, and provoking him to utter something harsh. When he has said a thing, he adheres to it inflexibly, and, therefore, I thought it much better not to risk anything.—I tell you the whole truth, Morley, as I ever will, and now, having done so, you shall act as you like."

"Then I will stay here, Juliet," replied Morley; "for as my whole happiness, depends upon obtaining you, it shall never be said that any rashness of mine whatsoever cast away the cup of happiness when it was so near my lips. I will not set off for London, then, until to-morrow morning, for I fear, Juliet, I could not keep myself away, if I were in the same town with you, and then I should never cease to reproach myself, if anything went wrong."

"Nothing will—nothing can!" said Juliet, with a smile.

Lady Malcolm, finding that their plan was settled, quitted the room for a moment; and Juliet Carr, seeing that a slight shade of apprehension still hung upon her lover's countenance, added—"Nothing will go wrong, Morley, de-

pend upon it; and though I dare not make any other promises, this, at least, I may venture to say; the hand you have sought, Morley, shall never be given to any one else—believe me, on my honour."

"I do believe you, dear Juliet," cried Morley, enthusiastically—"I do believe you, from what I feel myself; for I cannot think that those who have loved as we have, could ever forget that love so far, as, under any circumstances or for any consideration, to enter into an union with another than the person who first possessed their heart.—I do not know why I am apprehensive, Juliet, or of what; but certainly it is not lest you should give your hand to another."

The half-hour that was to intervene before the departure of Lady Malcolm and Juliet Carr passed as rapidly as the half-hours of happiness usually do; and Morley Ernstein was soon left alone to while away the time, amidst scenes which had seemed full of joy and beauty.

There is a fine paper in the *Spectator*, from the hand of Addison himself, upon the effect which would be produced in the physical world by the absence of the coloured rays of light, showing the dull greyness that would spread

over the whole universe; and certainly in the moral world, the absence of those we love produces the same effect. How instantly does all around us become changed?—how rapidly does everything lose its brightness and its glow?—how grey, how leaden, how heavy, falls upon the eye every object in which we took pleasure while the beloved were with us when the light of love is gone. Morley had fancied the scenery around him beautiful—he had thought everything full of loveliness and brightness; but it was in truth Juliet Carr that he saw reflected from all on which his eye rested; it was her beauty, her beaming countenance that he beheld on the sunshiny sea, in the bright landscape, in every ride or drive around; and now that she was gone, all things seemed, indeed "flat, stale, and unprofitable."

In vain he sought for occupation or for amusement; his spirit was impatient, his heart was apprehensive. Twenty times in the course of the day, he felt angry with himself for not accompanying Juliet to London—twenty times he felt tempted to send for horses, and follow her as fast as possible.

The day ended at length, notwithstanding all its tediousness, and gladly did he see the follow-

ing morning break, and the horses brought to the door. The coach went wondrous slow for his impatience, and every stoppage seemed to him an unpardonable crime on the part of the coachman. But the journey, as the tedious waiting of the preceding day had done, and as everything else, whether pleasant or unpleasant, must do, passed away in the end; and towards seven o'clock, he found himself at the door of the hotel.

On his table was a note from Lady Malcolm, very brief, and evidently written in haste. The few words which it contained were as follows:—"My dear Morley, Pray come here directly. I have a great deal to talk to you about; Helen Barham too is here, and has promised to stay with and console me."

Morley Ernstein let the note drop out of his hand. "To stay with and console her!—Console her, for what?" he exclaimed. "In the name of Heaven what has happened?" and snatching up his hat, he darted away to Lady Malcolm's, with the speed of lightning, making no answer to the waiter's demand of, "Dine at home today, sir?"

At Lady Malcolm's, the quiet appearance of everything provoked him. The footman who

opened the door presented as calm a face, answered with as easy a tone, and moved with as slow a step, as if everything had gone on in peace and happiness since Noah and his train issued forth from the ark. Morley Ernstein could not affect a tranquillity he did not feel, and while the man was walking up the stairs before him, as if his joints were becoming ossified, the young gentleman suddenly pushed past him, and entered the drawing-room unannounced.

Lady Malcolm was seated quietly at work, and Helen Barham was reading; but, though Morley looked round for the bright angelic face of Juliet, and the less prepossessing one of Mr. Carr, no such objects presented themselves; and the grieved, anxious expression of Helen's countenance, as she raised her eyes and beheld him, told at once that something painful had happened, something which she knew would distress him much.

"Oh, dear, I am so glad you are come!" exclaimed Lady Malcolm, "though I am sure I do not know what is to be done—but you must judge yourself."

"Where is Juliet?" demanded Morley, eagerly interrupting Lady Malcolm—"where is Juliet, dear Lady Malcolm?"

"She is gone," replied Lady Malcolm; "Mr. Carr would take her home with him, in spite of all I could say. I explained the whole to him; and Juliet herself, I am sure, told him all; but he said nothing but 'hum,' and 'ha!' and in reply, when I told him you would be here to-night, he only grumbled that he was sorry, but could not stay."

Morley was agitated far more than Lady Malcolm had expected. Love is blind in some respects, and in moments of joy is very dull of sight indeed; but at the first touch of sorrow, comes upon it a prophetic spirit which teaches it to see the evil afar off, and shrink at the anguish that too often besets its path. Morley stood still in the middle of the room, without attempting to take a seat, and looked steadfastly down upon the ground, asking himself what he should do next.

"My dear Lady Malcolm," he said, at length, "you must forgive me for making my visit a very hurried one. I can bear anything but uncertainty, and I must set off immediately for Yelverly."

"Not to-night!" exclaimed Lady Malcolm.

"Yes, this very night, dear lady!" replied Morley; "I should not sleep five minutes if my head

were on the softest pillow in England; so I may as well pass the hours of darkness in my carriage as anywhere else. I shall be at Morley Court about mid-day to-morrow, and can see Juliet and her father, and know my fate before another night pass over my head."

"Oh! it will all go very well," said Lady Malcolm; "do not be afraid, my dear Morley. If you but consider, you will see that Mr. Carr will never be so foolish as to make any difficulty. He thinks of nothing on earth but money, you know, and in that point he certainly cannot object to you."

Morley smiled sadly, but still with some renewal of hopes, and he answered: "Well, we shall see; but at all events I cannot bear uncertainty, and will go away at once."

"Nay, nay," rejoined Lady Malcolm—"stay a little; here is your young friend Helen Barham, to whom you have not said a word."

Morley felt that he had been unkind, and going round, he took Helen's hand. It was as cold as marble; and, as she looked up in his face, it was with an expression that struck him much, and carried him away for a moment from the selfishness of his own sorrow. The look was not a grave one; on the contrary, it was intended

to be cheerful; but the forced smile, the eyes that were full of sadness, the quivering of the lip and nostril, betraying a struggle against tears, all spoke of grief at heart; and Morley, after conversing with her for some little time, went away from Lady Malcolm's house, saying to himself—as I have had occasion to say more than once—although he saw nothing of the feelings that he commiserated, except that they were sorrowful — "Alas, poor Helen Barham!"

CHAPTER XIII.

It was at Yelverly, on a summer's evening, but not upon one of those bright evenings which I have described in another place. The weather had sadly changed, with all the mutability of temperature which manifests itself so strangely in England, as if for the purpose of affording a contrast to the firm and constant character of the people. The sky was covered with grey clouds, the wind was from the cold north-east, sweeping sorrowfully over the fields and through the hedge-rows round Yelverly; and that which had seemed sunshiny, rich, and beautiful, was now to the eye all cold, sad, and desolate. The cattle gathered themselves under the shelter of the hedges, the sheep drew close together, the birds sat motionless upon the boughs, and some

wheeling flights of crows, high up in the sky, added to the autumnal-look which had so suddenly come over the world.

Notwithstanding the inauspicious aspect of the afternoon, Juliet Carr had wandered forth with a shawl wrapped close over her fair bosom to keep out the rude touch of the blast, and her veil thrown over her head and face. Her heart was somewhat sad, as may well be supposed, for she had been suddenly separated, without the slightest expectation of being so, from him that she loved best on earth. But still, though her mind was not of a very sanguine or hopeful nature, and her feelings were as deep and keen as ever dwelt in woman's heart, yet she was no more than sad, for not one word had passed her father's lips to make her think he would absolutely disapprove of her union with Morley Ernstein. He had remained perfectly silent upon the subject: somewhat gloomy, indeed, but nothing more; and that gloominess Juliet thought might, perhaps, proceed from a feeling of indisposition, for the fatigues of the journey had brought on an attack of illness, which, though not alarming, was severe.

To see him suffer, of course, had not lightened the load upon his daughter's heart; more espe-

cially as, at such moments, he repelled every effort to soothe and comfort him. Indeed, it was clear that, in sickness, he preferred being attended by any one else than Juliet; and the sight of her, whose appearance was hailed in the cottage of the poor as the visit of a consoling angel, seemed rather to affect Mr. Carr, in his hours of illness, with painful and unpleasant feelings. It was not that he was cross or morose with her, for it was scarcely possible for any human being to be so; and, on the contrary, he was usually much more gentle with her than with any other person, seeming to pay a sort of deferential respect to her opinion, which sometimes surprised even Juliet herself. But when he was ill, he had always some excuse ready for sending her away, and this was so marked that she perceived it, and perceived it with sorrow.

Such had been the case on the present occasion. Juliet and her father had arrived the day before, at Yelverly, Mr. Carr feeling himself at the time extremely unwell. His illness had increased considerably during the night; and Juliet, though evidently not much to his satisfaction, had remained attending upon him during the whole day. Towards evening,

however, he became more impatient; and upon pretence that it was better for her health to take exercise, he insisted upon her going out—reminding her, that the cottagers on different parts of the estate had not seen her for some weeks.

Juliet, at the time I have brought her before the reader's eyes again, had strolled out to one of the distant hamlets which belonged to her father, had called at two or three of the houses, where no slight joy and satisfaction had greeted her arrival, had seen that all which could be done to promote the happiness and comfort of the poor had been executed during her absence, and was walking home again, with a heart somewhat sorrowful, when she heard the sound of a horse's feet proceeding at a rapid pace along the highway hard by. She was at this time in one of the small green fields that I have mentioned, about a mile and a half from Yelverly house, and was crossing the meadow by a foot-path running from one corner to another, which was terminated by a gate and stile leading to the main road.

Juliet's heart beat at the sound of that horse's feet, she knew not well why, for manifold were the horsemen who rode along that road, and not a few of them went at the same rapid and im-

patient pace which those footfalls indicated; but yet her heart beat with the thought that it might be Morley Ernstein; and, though it was very natural that she should so think, for love is as full of hopes as fears—rapid, causeless, wild—yet she scolded herself for entertaining idle expectations, when she had no right whatever to suppose that Morley could have followed her so soon.

Juliet looked eagerly forward as she approached the stile, before which the horseman must pass, and in a moment after, the figure of Morley Ernstein himself flitted across like lightning, mounted on the same splendid horse which he was riding when they met under the walls of his own park. He turned not his head to the right or to the left, little dreaming that Juliet was so near; and though she would have given a world to call to him, knowing right well that Yelverly was the object of his ride, and that he would be sadly disappointed at not finding her there, yet a feeling of modest shame withheld her till it was too late.

Quickening her pace to look after him, however, Juliet approached the stile rapidly; but just as she reached it the clatter of the horse's feet for a moment increased, then ceased alto-

gether—it seemed to her very strangely; and when, throwing open the gate, with a beating heart, she looked down the road in the direction which Morley had taken, she saw the horse just struggling up from the ground, and her lover lying motionless beside it.

Juliet screamed not, she paused not, she uttered not a word, but darted on like lightning. The horse was all cut and bleeding, shewing with what a shock he had fallen; but the poor animal, as if with generous forgetfulness of his own suffering, after the first trembling gaze around him, bent down his head to the prostrate body of his master, seeming to enquire why he lay there so still and silent.

Oh, how cold was the heart of Juliet Carr, when coming up she looked upon the motionless form of him she loved best on earth, and asked herself—"Is he dead!" She knelt down, she raised his head, she gazed upon his face. It was covered with dust from the road, but there was no blood. The fine expressive eyes were closed, the teeth were hard set; but as she looked upon him he drew a deep breath. There was still life! and her first words were—"Praise be to God!"

Just at that moment, clear and gay, came the

merry note of some peasant boy, as he whistled across the lea. Sad, sad were those merry sounds to the ear of Juliet Carr, and yet they brought the hope of relief, for the place was at the distance of half a mile to any dwelling-house, and she feared to leave Morley lying there while she ran to procure help. Advancing to a gate a little further on, she looked into the field, and saw the boy whose wild music she had heard, coming slowly and heavily along, with some instrument of husbandry upon his shoulder, and beckoning him eagerly to her, she sent him away to the nearest cottages to procure all the assistance that he could.

In the meanwhile she remained by the side of him she loved, gazing down upon him with eyes from which the tears now began to drop fast, and watching with faint hope for some sign of returning consciousness. She made some efforts, too, to call him to life herself: she untied the handkerchief that was round his neck, she opened the collar of his shirt, she brought some water in her fair hands from a neighbouring stream; and, kneeling down beside him, sprinkled his brow; and, as she did so, Juliet looked timidly around to see if any one was near, and then pressed her lips upon his forehead and dewed it with her tears.

Morley moved not, however, even at the touch of love, though he still breathed; and in about a quarter of an hour four men came down, bringing a hurdle from one of the neighbouring fields. Upon it Morley Ernstein was laid, and the men, lifting him up, under Juliet's direction, carried him to Yelverly, the boy leading the horse, which had never attempted to stir from the spot.

Arrived at the house, Morley Ernstein was carried up stairs and laid in the room which had been inhabited by Lieberg, Juliet accompanying the people who bore him thither, and casting aside the consideration of everything else but the one great object of doing all in her power to restore him to life. A man was instantly despatched on horseback for a surgeon, and Juliet hastened to tell her father what had happened, and to seek his approval of her conduct.

She found, however, that the news had been already communicated, but what surprised her more was to find a stranger seated by her father's bedside. He was a sickly-looking young man—but to spare further description, I may add, that though a stranger to Juliet, he is not so to the reader, being no other than the brother of Helen Barham. The young man started up

somewhat awkwardly, for he had been little used to the society of ladies, and had not those qualities in his own character which enable men of fine minds to assimilate themselves rapidly to what is higher, nobler, and more graceful in the mind and demeanour of others.

Juliet's pale face and haggard look, while she told her father of the accident which had occurred, did not escape the old man's eyes, and he fixed a keen and searching look upon his daughter's countenance which pained Juliet, and added other apprehensions to those which she already entertained.

"I think, Juliet," he said, as she concluded, "that you might have taken him to some cottage nearer than this house, and not have put me to all the expense and trouble of having him here."

"Oh, my dear father!" exclaimed Juliet, turning away with a sad and reproachful look; but Mr. Carr, who displayed in general a deference for her opinion, which he did not evince for that of any one else, cried out quickly, "Well, well, Juliet, the thing is done now and cannot be helped; we must make the best of it."

At that moment one of the maids entered the room with a quick step, saying, "Miss Carr—Miss Carr! there's Mr. Langley, the

surgeon, up at the rectory, with Mrs. Lee the rector's wife."

"Send for him directly," cried Juliet, following the maid out of the room—"lose not a minute, Jane."

The girl hastened away herself, and in about ten minutes more the surgeon was in the house. Juliet accompanied him to the room where Morley Ernstein lay, and watched with anxiety—which may have been deeply felt by those who love, but can never be described even by those who have felt it—the long, the terribly long examination on which hung the hopes of life and death. She uttered not a word; she breathed not a sigh; she was so still in that intense anxiety, that she not only felt but could hear her heart beating.

The surgeon turned round, at length, and looked at her, seeing then, for the first time, that some deep feeling was busy in her bosom. He spoke not to her, but bowed his head gently, with a look of encouragement; and then the tears burst forth in floods from her eyes, and she turned away towards the window. At the same moment the surgeon drew from his pocket that little case of instruments, the sight of which has so often produced the shudder of mortal antipathy on the manly frame—the operation of which

has with equal frequency plunged hearts full of affection and tenderness into the bitterest agony of earthly sorrow, or restored smiles and sunshine to the bright domestic hearth.

The lancet and the bandage were soon produced, and the red blood spouted freely from the arm of the injured man. A minute or two after, while Juliet was still looking forth from the window, she heard a voice which made her whole frame thrill. It was the rich melodious tone of the lips of him she loved, but low and softened; and darting to the bedside, she cast herself upon her knees, exclaiming, "Thank God!—thank God!"

Great indeed was the change which the flowing of that blood produced. The dull heavy aspect of life without intelligence was gone. The clear bright soul had resumed its sway in the mortal tenement, and looked out from the window of the eye.

"Juliet, Juliet!" said Morley Ernstein, "where am I? Something has happened!"

But the surgeon held up his hand, saying, "Do not speak. You must be kept perfectly quiet, especially till the blood has flowed freely. This will all pass away, but we must guard against any fever.—Do not be agitated, my dear Miss

Carr, all will go well, I assure you. The only thing that is necessary is quiet: and therefore I must now have the room cleared. Two or three days of perfect tranquillity and confinement will remove all evil, except aches and bruises. So you may rest satisfied, and leave this gentleman to my care without any apprehension."

"I will leave him for the present," replied Juliet; "but I must be his nurse, Mr. Langley. I have known this gentleman from childhood, and I am sure that Sir Morley Ernstein will like my tending as well as that of any other."

"Better — far better — than any on the earth," replied Morley, holding out his hand to her, while the surgeon was busy binding the bandage round his other arm. "To see you near me, Juliet, is enough of itself to make me well.—I remember now that my horse fell, but how I came hither I do not recollect."

"We will tell you all that afterwards," replied the surgeon; "and if, in order to make you well, Miss Carr must come back again," he added, with a meaning smile, "I can have nothing to say; only she must leave you for the present—for two or three hours at least. During that time I must stay and watch you; but

when I am sure that all is going on right, she shall take her turn."

On leaving the room of Morley Ernstein, Juliet proceeded at once to the chamber of her father, to report the state of their young guest; for although she was almost sure to find, in any communication with Mr. Carr, something to shock and pain her, yet she struggled against the repugnance naturally engendered by his words and demeanour, and overcame, from a sense of duty, every inclination to conceal from the eyes of her parent the feelings of her own heart.

Had she found her father alone on the present occasion, all that she felt towards Morley Ernstein would undoubtedly have been poured forth; but William Barham was still with him, and Juliet saw with some apprehension that Mr. Carr's face was flushed and feverish. He was irritable too, and spoke angrily of her having been so long away. She listened with patience, and made no reply, but informed him of the state of Sir Morley Ernstein, and told him the surgeon's opinion, that the young baronet would soon be well.

"I wish, my dear father," she added, in the end, "that you would see Mr. Langley your-

self. You do not seem at all better, and as he is now in the house, it would be wiser to consult him."

"If he will not charge it as a visit to me," said Mr. Carr, "I shall have no objection. But I am not going to pay him for doctoring me when he is getting paid for his time by this young Baronet."

"Then I will send him, sir," said Juliet, and much reason had she to be glad that she had persuaded her father to see the surgeon; for it proved that Mr. Carr was more seriously ill than he imagined, and the recovery of Morley Ernstein was much more rapid than his own. Nevertheless, more than one week passed before the young Baronet was suffered to quit his room; and the situation of Juliet Carr, it must be owned, was somewhat strange, not only in relation to Morley, but also in relation to William Barham, who, at Mr. Carr's request, continued to reside in the house.

All the cold proprieties of society—the icy fetters with which the evil acts of the bad have contrived to chain the warmest affections of the generous and the good—did certainly from time to time present themselves to the mind of Juliet Carr, and acted, in some degree, as a

check upon her. But that degree was a very small one. Her heart was too pure, her mind too candid, all her intentions and all her thoughts too high and holy for evil in any shape to present itself to her imagination; and that which she herself knew not to be wrong, she could with difficulty believe would be represented as wrong even by a harsh world.

Many hours of the day, then, did she spend with Morley Ernstein, cheering him, soothing him; and the only restraint that she did put upon herself was to ensure that those hours were not passed with him alone—so long, at least, as he was confined to his own chamber. There was always some servant in the room with her—not a little to Morley's annoyance, if we may say the truth—but two or three gentle words from Juliet, explaining to him her reasons, convinced him that she was right. He loved her too well to wish that, for his sake, she should do anything which might bring one reproach upon his future wife.

Still those hours were most sweet to both of them—perhaps not the less sweet for the slight restraint under which they laboured; for there are times, as every one must have felt, when the partial indulgence of our feelings

gives greater delight than even the full enjoyment, as the slight airy haze which sometimes covers a landscape makes it seem more beautiful than it would appear, unveiled and distinct. The time soon came, however, when he could come down to the drawing-room, and sit with her there alone, but it was only during one day that he enjoyed that privilege, for William Barham, who had previously remained almost entirely in Mr. Carr's room, except in those hours when he was rambling over the country round, now contrived to intrude his society continually upon Morley Ernstein and Juliet, although it must have been very evident to him that his company was anything but pleasant to them, and although he himself always seemed ill at ease in the presence of the young Baronet.

On their first interview, as may be well supposed, Morley was not a little surprised to find him in England, and at Yelverly; but the account of his shipwreck was soon given, and his appearance there was explained by the old friendship of Mr. Carr for several members of his family. After some questions on these subjects, Morley paid little or no attention to him, except as an annoying restraint upon Juliet and himself. In order to free himself from such a

check, Morley urged the surgeon vehemently to let him go out sooner than the man of healing was inclined to permit. At length, however, the prohibition was taken off; and that very day the lover accompanied Juliet Carr upon her morning walk. But of the walk itself, and of all that followed, we must speak in another chapter.

CHAPTER XIV.

Love is certainly a strange and wonderful power, affecting all things, within us and without us, by its own magical influence, brightening all things, calling forth beauty from all things, bringing out infinite variety from objects that would otherwise be tame and full of sameness, and impressing with the stamp of immortal memory, feelings, thoughts, and words that seem the most evanescent, light, and transitory.

Morley and Juliet walked on with love for their sole companion; but, oh! how that sweet comrade of the way enriched with marvellous splendour the calm fields of Yelverly. But not only for them did he produce changes, but in them also were wonderful alterations effected. The lovely countenance of Juliet Carr, always

full of deep and high expression, now became the mirror of all the thousand emotions that trembled in her bosom. It was like a beautiful lake, rippled by the gentle wind of an April day, which wafted over it innumerable bright gleams and soft shadows, rendering it not only lovely in itself, but lovely in its varieties. The sunshine was predominant, though there were still some clouds, as I have said, for where can there be vast hopes without light fears? and though Juliet knew not what it was she apprehended, yet, from time to time, there was a doubt came over her to soften the feeling of joy, like the flattened third, which will often throw into a gay piece of music a tone of melancholy, which renders the whole far more touching.

She knew not, as I have said, what she doubted or what she feared; and perhaps such fears as she did entertain might arise only from that uncertainty of the stability of any human enjoyment which is implanted in the deepest depths of man's heart—a voice, as it were, from the tomb, telling him that all in this unstable world must perish and pass away—the brightest hopes, the warmest feelings, the fondest affections, purposes, desires, enjoyments, must know decay as well as every other earthly thing, as

well as every leaf, and flower, and bright form, and beautiful conception, and give place to things of other unknown worlds, which, we may fondly trust, are more stable than any of the joys of this. It might be that impression of the mortality of all this earth's beings that made Juliet Carr, even in the midst of love and joy, feel the faint shadow of some undefined apprehensions cross the sunshine of her mind from time to time. Nevertheless, the summer of love was not less bright, the harvest of joy not less abundant.

With Morley Ernstein that bright dream of youth was warmer and more glowing still, and he would have called himself completely happy, had it not been that fate still left that *something to be wished for* which accompanies us from the cradle to the grave—which is an absolute ingredient in all the happiness of this earth where fruition is but a point, and which leads us on to that grand state of being where everything is eternal, whether it be joy, and hope, and love, or pain, remorse, and despair,—that something to be wished for, the great main-spring of human action and endeavour, without which the senses, and the heart, and the brain would all stand still, like a clock run down,—that

something to be wished for, which leads us sweetly on from the soft days of infancy, when we clutch with feeble efforts the daisy in the grass, through the flowery paths of love, through the noble but more laborious ways of a high ambition, unto the bed of death itself, where, still beyond the tomb, the higher, holier object stands, and the something to be wished for is seen, at length, in the infinite promises of Heaven!

That there was something to be wished for, that the hand of Juliet Carr was not yet his, that it was still the object of hope and expectation, could scarcely be said to diminish the enjoyment of Morley Ernstein; but yet his eager nature, the fiery and impetuous spirit, of which I have so often spoken, was at that time in full ascendancy, and did not suffer the calmer, the more placid spirit of the soul, to rest satisfied with that tranquil happiness which he possessed, and which might have lasted for many a day longer, had he not grasped at more. He was anxious to know his fate, he was anxious to call Juliet his own, and he pressed her vehemently to communicate at once to her father the love that existed between them, and to beg his sanction of their immediate union.

There were contending emotions in Juliet's breast, there was a timid shrinking from the task of avowing her love to any one but him who possessed it, and yet a reluctance to withhold any part of her confidence from her father, even for an hour. Had it not been for this latter feeling she would have urged Morley to wait patiently for some time, to stay till Mr. Carr was no longer oppressed and irritated by sickness, to enjoy the bright present, and not to rush too rashly into the dim future; but the thought of duty intervened, though she did hesitate in some degree, saying—

"My father is still very unwell, Morley, and I really do not know whether I shall have any opportunity to day; for that youth is now continually with him, and not only that, Morley, but when he is sick he seems so impatient of my society, and, in spite of all that I can do to soothe and please him, sends me so soon away, that whatever I have to say to him I am generally compelled to say abruptly. Now, dear Morley, I could not enter upon this subject abruptly—at least, it would be with very great pain that I did so."

Nevertheless, Morley Ernstein still pressed his request, and Juliet, not grieved but agitated,

consented to do what he wished, and returned with him to the house, thoughtful, silent, and with steps somewhat wavering and uncertain.

"It must be done, some time, dear Juliet," said Morley, after they had entered the mansion, "and it were better done at once, my beloved. I will wait for you here; and, oh! come back to me, Juliet, with bright looks and happy tidings."

Morley Ernstein remained alone in the drawing-room, and he had not been there five minutes before he began to think that Juliet was long in returning. He then walked up and down the room, and looked out of the window; and then there was the sound of a closing door, and Morley Ernstein listened for Juliet's step. A step, indeed, was heard, but it was not that of her he loved; and, in a minute or two after, he saw William Barham issue forth from the porch, walk slowly up between the yew trees, and, passing through the iron gate, stop to speak, for a moment, with one of his (Morley's) grooms, who had brought a horse over for him from his own house. After that the young man walked on, and Morley Ernstein sat down and tried to look at a book. He neither saw one letter of the printed page, nor one line of the

engraving that illustrated it, and he soon closed the volume again, and resumed his impatient pacing up and down the room.

A quarter of an hour went by—half an hour came to an end, and, muttering, "Surely something must be the matter," Morley opened the drawing-room door. There came a low murmuring sound from the chamber of Mr. Carr, as if two persons were conversing eagerly, and in the tone of one of them Morley recognised, at once, the voice of Juliet. Although the door between Mr. Carr's room and the passage prevented what was said from being heard, Morley instantly drew back, lest even a word should catch his ear; but he was not destined to remain long in supense. A moment after, the door of Mr. Carr's room opened and closed, and the step of Juliet Carr was heard in the passage. But where was its elastic lightness? Where the quick and bounding tread with which she used to seek the room where Morley Ernstein waited her.

She came slowly, seemingly sadly. He could bear the doubt no more, and once more going forth, he looked up the passage in the direction of Mr. Carr's chamber. Juliet was there, but she was pale, trembling, supporting her half-

fainting steps by laying her hand upon the cornice of the old wainscot, and with her bright eyes deluged in tears. As soon as she saw him, she made an effort and came forward more quickly, and Morley, throwing his arm around her, drew her into the drawing-room and closed the door. He pressed her to his bosom, he asked her again and again, in a tone of wild anxiety, what it was that grieved her; but Juliet continued to hide her face upon his breast, and weep in silence for several minutes, speech, and almost thought, seeming for the time denied to her.

At length, however, she sobbed forth a few inarticulate words. They were merely—"It is all in vain, Morley—it is all in vain! I can never be yours. I have promised not to stay with you either—I must leave you, to see you no more;" and again her face, which she had raised for a moment to speak, fell upon his bosom, and her eyes deluged it with tears.

"God of Heaven!" cried Morley Ernstein, "what is the meaning of this, Juliet? I must not—I cannot—I will not, lose you so! To what can your father object? With what can he find fault, in myself, my fortune, and my station?"

"It is not that—it is not that!" cried Juliet.

"It is ancient hatred, Morley—it is other plans, other designs. Oh, Heaven! that my father should ever have a share in causing you such grief!"

"Grief, indeed!" cried Morley Ernstein. "But will you, Juliet—will you suffer yourself to be the means of inflicting such grief upon me. Juliet, you must not, you cannot act so. You are pledged and plighted to me. You are mine, my beloved, and I will never forego my claim upon your hand. Oh, Juliet! if you love me, if you have ever loved me, you will not fail me now in this hour of terrible trial. Juliet, you must consent to be mine at all risks, and without the consent of any one, if that consent is withheld upon such unworthy grounds. If one word can be brought against my character and reputation, if it can be shewn that I have done anything in life base, dishonourable, or wrong, I will submit, not without agony, but without a murmur. But, Juliet, if such is not the case, and if you have no reason to believe that I am unworthy of you, you have a duty to perform to me as well as to others, and, dear Juliet, I call upon you, by every tie of love and affection, to perform it at once. You have no right, Juliet, to be the means of trampling

upon my heart; to doom all my future years to misery and solitary despair, to take away all the brightness of my youth, and but to bless me for a moment in order to make me miserable for ever. Fly with me, Juliet—fly with me! Once united, your father will readily forgive a step to which he himself drove us. Fly with me, and be mine at once ——."

As he spoke he pressed her closer to his bosom, but Juliet drew back and disengaged herself from his arms, still leaving her hand in his, however. "Morley, it must not, and it cannot be," she said. "What! would you have Juliet Carr fly from the house of her sick father, for the purpose of violating his express commands? Oh, no, Morley!—no, that can never be. You would despise me if I did it. But that is not the only obstacle, Morley; there are a thousand things that you will learn too soon, which would render it impossible for me to give you my hand now, even were I willing to forget my duty to my parent. Oh, no, no," she continued, while the tears which had ceased for a moment again burst forth from her eyes—"the time will come when you will hate me, Morley, when you will abhor the day that you first knew anything of me or mine. That—that is

worse than anything to bear—to think that you should ever have cause to look upon the day that you met Juliet Carr, as the most unfortunate of your life."

Morley Ernstein gazed upon her for a moment in silence, puzzled by the words she uttered; but at length he said—"What is it you mean, Juliet?—You are going to give your hand to another! Oh, Juliet Carr! beware, beware! Think upon the responsibility you draw upon your own head. Remember, you not only blast my happiness and peace for ever, but you take from me all confidence in virtue—all belief in honour—all trust in human love! You drive me to vice, to wickedness, perhaps to crime; you plunge me into that whirl of dissipation and folly, which is the only resource for reckless, hopeless, trustless despair.—Juliet, you are going to wed another, and ruin both yourself and me!"

"Never, never, never!" cried Juliet, vehemently. "Morley, you do me wrong; indeed, indeed you do! I call that God to witness, whose will I believe I am obeying in sacrificing my own happiness to the commands of my parent, that no consideration upon earth shall ever induce me to give my hand to any other

man; that I will love you ever, dear Morley, to the last hour of my life, that I will pray for you as for a brother dearest to my heart, and that, when death shall free me from a world where there is nothing but sorrow before me, you shall have a token to know that my affection was unchanged even to the last hour. I ask nothing of you, Morley, in return," she continued, after a moment's pause—"I ask nothing in return, but that you should try never to think harshly of poor Juliet Carr; to separate her acts in your mind from the acts of others, and, if you have ever loved her and esteemed her truly, to remember her but for the purpose of keeping yourself firm and steadfast in all those high and noble principles that shed around you a glory in her eyes which shall never pass away from the picture that memory will supply of the only man she ever loved. Let me ever hear of you with pride and pleasure, Morley. Let me hear, too, of your being happy—as happy as the circumstances will permit. Yes, Morley," she added, laying both her hands gently upon his arm, "happy with another, who may love you, perhaps, nearly as well as I do, and who may render your future life brighter than I can do. Oh, yes Morley! yes, you were not formed

for solitary existence. You were formed for giving and receiving happiness, and night and day will I pray that it may be your lot, and that, whatever course of life you pursue, you may ever be remembered amongst the great, and good, and happy."

Morley cast himself down in a seat, and hid his eyes with his hands; not that they contained a tear, for they burned in his head like living coals, but to shut out, as it were, the terrible and confused images that flitted before his sight as a vision of the future.

"Farewell, Morley," said the voice of Juliet, sadly and solemnly, as if she was speaking on the bed of death—"farewell, Morley—farewell for ever!"

Morley Ernstein started up and caught her again to his bosom. Tears came then to his relief, he kissed her again and again with agony which those only can conceive who have known what it is to part for ever with those that they loved best on earth. Juliet wept, too, in silence for a moment, and then again murmuring—"Farewell!" she tore herself from him, and darted away.

CHAPTER XV.

The chilly wind that sighed in long heavy gusts over moor and fell and wild grass-covered mountain, the damp rawness of the air, the heavy clouds that lay detached in strange-shaped masses upon the edge of the distant horizon, all told that the sweet season of the summer was come to a close, and that the world was dropping into the old age of the year.

In the northern parts of England, the summer often seems to go out, as it were, at once, and autumn, especially towards sunset, puts on the chilling aspect of the winter. But the moment at which I choose to open this chapter was beyond that of sunset by some hours, and the traveller who rode alone through a wild, bleak part of Northumberland, appeared, by the

rapidity of his pace, to be eager to arrive at some place of shelter for the night. Such, however, was not the case; and little did that traveller care at what hour he reached the home to which his steps were bent, for despair was in his heart, and all was barren. The cheerful hall, the blazing hearth, the gay banquet, the familiar faces, were all to him cold, and lifeless, and not less desert than the wild hill-side over which he now took his impetuous way.

The fresh and beaming countenance of Morley Ernstein, which but a few short months before, when he was first introduced to the reader, breathed health, and strength, and energy, was now pale, and anxious, and depressed. The air, the bland expression of youth, was gone, sorrow and disappointment, and strong passionate thought, had set the seal of mature life upon his brow. Every touch of early years and fresh inexperience was done away, and any one who could have looked upon his countenance would have said that six or seven-and-twenty years must have passed over his head, rather than the shorter, brighter count of one-and-twenty.

Though the night was chilly and raw, as I have stated, it was not dark; a grey film indeed

covered the sky, composed of cold damp vapours, driven hastily along by the keen wind. But beneath was the moon, which was now near the edge of the horizon, and which not only afforded a considerable portion of light, even when her broad disk was not seen, but from time to time glanced through the hurrying clouds, and glared, large, and cold, and wan upon the traveller's eye.

Still he rode forward along the sandy road, now having nothing before him but the dim forms of the hills over which his way lay, cutting upon the sky, now catching a glimpse of some distant tower or village steeple, rising black and sad above the horizon for a moment, and then sinking into the confused darkness of all around, as he dashed onward. At length the light-coloured sand, which had marked out the road, became mingled with some darker substance, and the path he was following was thenceforth scarcely to be distinguished. The speed of the traveller, however, was not relaxed, and with that sort of recklessness which bitter disappointment brings with it, instead of striving to guide his horse he let the rein float loose upon the animal's neck, thinking—"He will find his way—and if not, it matters little."

He was thus crossing an open moor at a rapid rate, when a faint cry of some kind struck his ear. He paid no attention to it, however, thinking that it proceeded from some wild bird of night, startled from its marshy nest by the sounding feet of his horse; and rode quickly on, still plunged in his own thoughts, when suddenly the beast that bore him shied wildly from some object at the side of the road, and Morley Ernstein, catching up the rein, drew the animal in, and turned his head towards the thing that had frightened him. He then heard the voice of a child, apparently crying bitterly, and although he had become by this time reckless and careless of himself, the better part of his heart's feelings was still untouched, and, springing to the ground, he approached the spot where the little wanderer sat.

Morley found there a boy of about four years old, who at first made no answer to his manifold questions but by tears. At length, however, he made out that the poor child was crying for some one whom he had lost, and whom he called "Annie;" but difficult indeed was it to discover where or how this person was to be found. All that the boy could tell was, that he had left her "by the fire," and Morley in vain

endeavoured to discover where the cottage lay to the fire in which he fancied the poor child alluded; the urchin still replying to all enquiries that he had left Annie by the fire.

"Well, my boy," said Morley, in a kindly tone, "shall I take you to seek for Annie?" and the child, instantly starting up, held out his hand. "I will take you up before me on the horse," continued the gentleman, and the boy shewed anything but unwillingness, exclaiming —"Harry did that."

The young gentleman accordingly remounted, taking the little fellow up on the pommel of the saddle. "Now, which way shall I turn, my man?" he said. But the boy could give him no information; and he rode on, determined to place the child in safety at the next village, and then to send out different persons to enquire for his parents. Proceeding more slowly than he had hitherto done, Morley advanced across the moor, the undulations of the ground preventing him from seeing beyond a few hundred yards around him. At length a bright glare suddenly burst upon his sight, rising over the slope before him, and a moment or two after he came in sight of one of those immense fires of waste coal, which mark out the edges of

pits in the North. The flame rose up many yards in height, waving to and fro, as the keen wind drove it, and canopying itself with a cloud of lurid smoke, while below appeared the intense glow of the fire, spreading over some twenty or thirty feet of ground.

"There—there's the fire!" cried the boy; "Annie's by the fire—Annie's by the fire!" and Morley, beginning to comprehend what the poor baby meant, pushed his horse onwards towards the glare, though it was not without great difficulty that he forced the animal to approach it. No human form, however, appeared by the light, and the boy, after seeming somewhat bewildered, exclaimed—"No, it is not there—no, it is not there.—It is the other fire."

At the same time he pointed with his hand towards the east, and Morley, following that indication, turned his horse once more upon the road. As soon as he had issued forth from the bright red light that spread around, he perceived a faint glow at some distance, in the direction towards which the boy had pointed; and, as he rode onward, he found that he was approaching another of the pit-mouths, where a still larger pile of waste coal than that which he had before seen was blazing up into the sky. Before he

reached it, however, the road dipped down into a little ravine, and as he followed its course, losing sight of the fire for a moment, he heard the voice of lamentation, and a moment or two afterwards some one from the top of the bank exclaimed, in a tone of agony—"Have you found him, Harry?—have you found him?"

Morley drew in his horse. "If it be of a child you are speaking," he cried, raising his voice, "I have just found one on the moor. He is quite safe, and I will bring him round to the fire in a minute."

The voice which had spoken made no reply, but in a moment or two after, Morley's horse carried him again within sight of the pit-mouth, which was still at the distance of three or four hundred yards. By the light of the burning coal, he beheld a female figure walking about with gesticulations which he easily conceived to be those of grief; but it was evident that the person whom he there saw could not be the woman whose voice he had heard from above, when he was in the ravine. He rode on, however, towards the fire, and was again saluted by the name of Harry as he came up, though, the moment after, the mistake was perceived, and the old woman, for such she was, who stood by

the blaze, drew back a step or two, as if inclined to avoid him. No sooner did she behold the child, however, than she darted forward, and held out her arms, exclaiming, with a wild cry of joy—"He's saved!—he's saved!"

The young gentleman lifted the boy gently down to her, and then dismounted himself, not a little interested in all that he saw; and, to say the truth, at that moment Morley Ernstein was not a little glad to find that any subject upon earth could afford him matter of interest even for a moment; for the dull and heavy load of despair was upon his heart, and, not an hour before, all the things of life had seemed in his eyes to have become light and valueless when put in the balance against that ponderous weight.

The woman's first impulse led her to kiss the child again and again, even before she offered any thanks to his restorer. The boy also shewed not a little joy at finding himself again in the arms of the old woman, and by the terms of endearment which he applied to her, Morley discovered that it was herself he had wished to designate by the name of Annie—by which, probably, he meant Granny. While he stood and gazed, however, at the joyful meeting,

between old age and infancy, the group was joined by another person, who seemed more deeply affected than even the old dame. It was a young woman of some three or four-and-twenty years of age, who now came running at full speed from the bank above the ravine, and she, too, without noticing Morley, caught the child to her bosom, pressing it close, and kissing it a thousand times. The young Baronet did not doubt for a moment that she was the boy's mother, for only a mother's heart could prompt such emotions as he there beheld.

When she had given vent to her feelings for a moment or two, however, she set the child down beside her, still holding it tight by the hand, and turned to gaze in silence upon Morley Ernstein, in which occupation the old woman was already deeply busy.

Morley returned the enquiring looks of both; for, to say the truth, he was somewhat surprised at the reception which he met with, and that not the slightest word of thanks or gratitude was proffered by either of the women for that which they evidently conceived to be a very great service. He could understand, indeed, that the elder woman might, either from natural rudeness or from timidity, be unwilling or unable to

express her thanks, for she was plain and homely in her attire, and in her appearance altogether, and was evidently a person of the lower orders. The younger woman, however, was not only pretty, graceful, and dressed in a style very much superior to her companion, but was distinguished by a lady-like and intelligent look, which seemed to promise a mind capable of comprehending what was due to her child's deliverer, and of expressing it easily and well. Both, however, gazed for more than a minute at Morley Ernstein without speaking, and then turned their looks enquiringly towards each other, as if doubtful what to say or how to act, and at length the younger drew the elder aside, and spoke to her for a moment or two in a whisper, while Morley Ernstein looked around him, not a little surprised at everything that he beheld.

Morley was unacquainted with that part of the country, having never visited his northern estates; and the sight of those immense fires, blazing in the midst of the night, surrounded by wild moors and naked hills, was calculated in itself to excite an imagination unusually rich and active, while the meeting with those two women in the midst of so desolate a scene, with not a trace of human habitation, except a low, miserable shed of turf,

which he saw not far from the mouth of the pit, and some of the machinery for raising coal, which lay at no great distance, supplied plenty of materials for fancy to work upon. Their strange manner, too; the contrast between the appearance of the one and that of the other; their deep emotions at recovering the child, and yet their seeming ingratitude to him who restored it; were all matters of curious speculation, and for the time diverted Morley's mind from the thought of himself.

"I will stay and see what comes of all this," he said to himself. "Occupation must now be my great object in life, the deadening of remembrance and regret, the striving for forgetfulness. I may as well take the matter for fresh thoughts wherever I find it.—I will pass the night here, it will be better than the dull solitude of Warmstone, where I should have nothing but bitter memory for my companion."

As he thus communed with himself, the murmured conversation between the two women was brought to an end, and the younger one advanced towards him, still speaking a word or two more to the other, "No, no, mother," she said, "he is not one of those; I know such sort of people better than you do. They may put on

the clothes of a gentleman, but they never look like him. This is not one of them, depend upon it. See how he stands; you never saw a thief-taker stand like that."

The old woman made no reply, and the young one continued addressing herself now to Morley Ernstein. "I am very much obliged to you, sir," she said, "and thank you a thousand times for saving my child, and bringing him back to me. He strayed away from his grandmother while she fell asleep by the fire, and we feared that he might have fallen into some old pit. I am very much obliged to you, sir, indeed, and thank you with my whole heart!"

As she spoke, she made Morley a low and graceful courtesy; but he replied, "Is not your husband looking for the child?—What you said to me from the top of the bank, when you first heard my horse's feet, made me think so, at least."

"He *is* looking for the boy, sir," answered the younger woman, "but he will soon be back again.—I am very much obliged to you, sir;" and again she made a low courtesy, as if to intimate that she wished the conference to come to an end. But Morley did not choose that such should be the case, and he exclaimed—"I will go

and seek for him. He is doubtless anxious about the child, and may very likely not return for long, unless he knows that the boy is found."

"Oh, he will return—he will return!—there is no fear, sir," replied the younger woman. "He is anxious enough, poor fellow, no doubt; but he will soon return, I am sure."

"You had better go away, young gentleman—you had better go away," cried the old woman, chiming in, with a more peremptory tone; "they are wild people in these parts, and you can do no good by staying here, and may do harm. You had better go away, I say, for this is no place for you—nor for me either," she added, in a lower tone. "I was never born for all this."

I have attempted to shew before, that the mind of Morley Ernstein was not very susceptible of fear; and though there was certainly a sort of menace in the tone of the old woman, his curiosity was but the more excited, and he replied, without hesitation—"Oh, dear, no! You had better let me go and look for him. It is the way of this world, where a man who has lost one thing must always go and help his neighbour who has lost something else."

"I think you are laughing at us," said the

younger woman, gravely; "and I tell you, too, I wish you would go, sir. It may be better for you if you do. If you have really lost anything, and any one here has found it, it shall be sent back to you."

"I am not laughing at you, my good lady," replied Morley; "what I have lost is my way, and I meant that I was going to call your husband back to his, when I have lost my own. Thus it was myself I was laughing at, if at any one. But the truth is, having, as I said, lost my way, I am about to ask you for shelter here during the night, as I must have, by the best calculation I can make, some sixteen or seventeen miles, if not more, to ride to my own home."

"Shelter here!" cried the old woman, looking at him eagerly, and even sternly—"what sort of shelter do you expect here, young man? Is this a place to seek shelter, or are we people that can give it?"

"I really do not know," answered Morley Ernstein. "I certainly thought that such a thing was possible, or I should not have asked it; there seems a cottage there ——"

Before the old woman could reply, there came the sound of a horse's feet approaching at

a quick pace, and the boy's mother, catching him up in her arms, darted away like lightning towards the spot where she had first been standing when met by Morley Ernstein. She seemed to reach it before the horseman, and Morley could just hear her exclaim—"He is safe, Harry—he is safe!—Wait till I come down to you!—Do not come on, I have something to say."

The horse apparently paused; for two or three minutes no other sound was heard from that quarter; and Morley would have been left to pursue, uninterrupted, his meditations upon the somewhat peculiar position in which he found himself placed, had not the old woman who stood beside him urged him somewhat eagerly to mount his horse and ride away.

"You don't look like a bad man," she said, "and you are certainly a young one, and it's a pity to risk a fresh and happy life for an idle whim. If you had seen as much sorrow as I have, you might very well sport with danger; but now, I tell you fairly, you are hazarding your life for nothing."

"I have seen sorrow enough, my good dame," replied Morley, "to care very little about life; but I believe, as you say, it were

better not to risk it. We have no right to do so in this world; God gave it to us for others, as much, if not more, than for ourselves. I will take your advice, then, and go."

Thus saying, he put his foot in the stirrup, mounted, and turned the rein to ride away; but he could not make up his mind to go fast, for the idea of flight from any sort of danger was unpleasant to him. Before he had gone two yards, then, the sound of the other horse's feet was renewed, and a moment after he saw a stout man, mounted on a powerful grey, come round by the road which he himself had followed, and approach at a quick pace towards the fire.

The young Baronet felt that a struggle might be approaching of a somewhat desperate character, and he grasped his riding-whip by the middle, without any sensation of fear, certainly, but with that degree of emotion which every one must experience at the prospect of coming strife. Without taking any apparent notice of the new comer, however, he pursued his way in the direct course, which he had at first taken, and which brought him within about ten yards of the path along which the other was now approaching.

Morley rode on, but as they crossed each other, the child's father drew up his horse, and seemed to gaze at the young Baronet attentively. He then said, "Good night!" to which Morley replied by exactly the same salutation, still riding on. The next instant, however, the other exclaimed—"Holloa! Sir Morley Ernstein! You must give a word to an old acquaintance, after bringing us back the babe!"

CHAPTER XVI.

The old and vulgar proverb—that misfortune makes us acquainted with strange bedfellows, is true in more senses than in one; for it not only brings us into contact with persons that we should never otherwise have met, but it makes us seek companionships which nothing else, perhaps, could have produced. To be recognised in such a tone, in such a place, might at any other time have made Morley Ernstein start with some surprise; but now he drew in his horse calmly and deliberately, and turned towards the man who addressed him, very little caring, to say the truth, who was the person, or what was his trade. In the meanwhile the other approached, and the light of the fire was sufficiently strong where they stood to shew

Morley a countenance that was familiar to him, but which, for a moment, he could not connect in memory with any particular circumstance or situation.

"Ay, you don't recollect me, sir," said the man; "and you saw me only in a place which I should not think of mentioning anywhere else than where we now stand—nor, indeed, for that matter, should I take the liberty of claiming acquaintance with you here, only it can do you no harm, and I wish to thank you for bringing back the babe."

While he had been speaking, the man's voice led Morley's mind back, by the paths of remembrance, to the point in the past which referred to their first meeting. "I recollect you now, Mr. Martin," he said; "but, to say the truth, we are at such a distance from the spot where we last saw each other, that you took me by surprise. So this was your child I found upon the common. How did it happen to stray so? The poor thing might have perished in such a night as this."

"True, sir—true!" replied Harry Martin, for it was that bold, and somewhat unscrupulous personage with whom Morley now stood face to face. "True, sir—true, the boy might have

perished, and with him my only tie to life. No, not my only tie either, for there is my poor girl, Mary, I must think of her a bit, too, though I often fancy she would be better off if I were gone. She would have been better off, sure enough, if she had never known me; but, however, she loves me, and I love her, dear little soul; and though I know you gentle people and others think that we in our way of life have little or no feelings of any kind, but just to drink and smoke, and fight a main of cocks, or something of that sort, yet it is not altogether so either, and we can love our wife, or our sweetheart, or our child, just as much as the best in the land. I know one thing, that if we had lost the babe, it would have broke my heart outright, though I can remember very well the time when I did not care anything about children, and thought they would only be a bother to one; but, somehow, since I had one of my own, I have got very fond of it, and I don't know how it is that fondness has made me think very differently of many other things too. So you see, sir, I am very much obliged to you,—only there is one favour I'll ask of you, which is not just to mention that you have seen me here; for the beaks are after me for a little

job I did some time ago, and I think of taking a swim over the herring-pond as a volunteer, for fear, as they say on board the ships, they should make me work my passage to Heaven by pulling at a rope's-end."

"I will certainly not mention it, Martin," replied Morley; "but I should like to hear something more of you. I asked that young woman, who is, I suppose, your wife, and her companion, to give me shelter in the cottage for this night, having got somewhat out of my way, and being, I fancy, some sixteen or seventeen miles from Warmstone Castle."

"Not so far as that, sir—not so far as that," said Harry Martin; "but, nevertheless, you shall be welcome to stay if you like it. I know I can trust you; but the women did not know who you were, and they are in a sad fright about me, poor things! I had left them, for an hour or two, to go and look out for news; but my poor wife could not be satisfied, and as I did not come so soon as she expected, went away to meet me, leaving the boy with his grandmother. The poor old woman was so tired with all our dodging about for the last two or three days, that she fell asleep by the fire, and the boy strayed away after a will-o-the-

wisp, or something of that kind, I suppose. But come, Sir Morley, if you like to stay with us, we will do the best we can for you, though what you call a cottage is but a hovel, and that the two women must have. There are some pitmen's cottages, however, two miles further up on the moor; but between you and I, bad as they call me, you may rest more safely with me than with them."

"I will stay by your fire, Martin," said Morley, dismounting and leading his horse back; and in a few minutes more, after some formalities and introductions of a particular kind, he was seated in what may be called Harry Martin's domestic circle, and in full conversation with him, his wife, and mother-in-law.

He perceived that the elder woman looked at him hard from time to time, and at length she said—"I was stupid not to know you, Sir Morley, for you are so like your father. There is something of your mother, too, about the eyes, but you are more like your father."

"I suppose you knew my father well, then?" answered Morley, looking at her steadfastly, in order to see whether he could trace in her worn, but still fine features, the countenance of any of the dependents of his family whom he had known

in youth. It was in vain that he did so, however; the face of the old woman was quite unknown to him, as her reply soon shewed him that it must be.

"Ay, I did know him well," replied the old woman, "and a good man he was. I wish I had always followed what he told me. It is now about eighteen years since I saw him, and then he said, very truly, that those who seek riches by wrong means, are sure to find poverty straight on their road."

"I certainly am sorry that you did not take his advice," said Morley; "but I trust you were led to do nothing very wrong in opposition to his counsel."

"Tut, nonsense, granny!" cried Harry Martin; "you are doting with your old stories. What wrong did you ever do, if it was not letting me marry your daughter? You were as good an old body as ever lived, and as thriving a one, too, after you came back from India, till both mother and daughter, I believe, fell in love with a scapegrace like myself."

"I did not fall in love with you, Harry," replied the old woman; "but I thought you better than you seemed, and, to say the truth, better than you are. You were frank and free;

I believed you would be kind to my poor girl, and, to do you but justice, you have been so. But what I am talking about is many years ago; she was then a babe, not so big as little Harry here, and I was the wife of Serjeant More, a good man and a kind, but somewhat too fond of money withal. Ay, it was a bad business, that; but it is of no use thinking of it now. I have not been in those parts, sir," she continued, "since I came back to England, and I should like much to hear of all the people there. Your father is dead, sir, I know; pray, how is your mother? She was a beautiful creature!"

"Alas!" replied Morley, "she has been long dead, too."

"Well-a-day!" exclaimed the old woman, and then, after a pause, she asked—"and Mr. Sanderstead's family, sir—how are they? He was just married then."

"He has now eight or nine daughters, I believe," answered Morley; "I know the room was full of them when I called there one morning."

"Ay," said the old woman, abstractedly, "and what has become of Lawyer Carr and his wife?"

Morley shrunk, as if a rude hand had been

laid upon a fresh wound, but he replied, after a moment's hesitation—"The old man is still living, but his wife has been dead, I find, for some years."

"Dead!—dead!" cried the old woman; "and is the child living—the daughter?"

"Yes, she is," replied Morley, rising—"she is living—Martin, I think I shall go on."

"Why, what's the matter, sir?" said Harry Martin, gazing on the young Baronet's face; "a minute ago you were all for staying, and now you must be gone."

"I am, perhaps, whimsical," replied Morley Ernstein; "I have become so lately. However, before I go, let me speak a word or two with you on your own affairs. You talk of going to America, if I understood you rightly. I do not wish to hear why, or anything about it—I can guess, perhaps; but two women and a child must be a burden to you under such circumstances. If they like to come up to Warmstone, while you make your escape, there is a vacant cottage, I hear, from my agent, which they can have, till they go to join you. Some furniture can be sent down from the Castle, and if you think fit, I will give full orders before I leave

Warmstone, for I shall not be there more than a day."

Harry Martin had risen while Morley was speaking, and was gazing in his face, with an expression in which doubt and suspicion seemed to mingle with satisfaction. "I don't think you would play me a trick, sir," he said, as Morley concluded, "and yet it's strange enough, your starting up in that way the moment the old woman mentioned Lawyer Carr!"

Morley returned his gaze with a look of unmixed surprise. "I don't understand what you mean," he answered; "what have you to do with Lawyer Carr? or Lawyer Carr to do with you?"

"Everything in the world," cried Harry Martin, knitting his brows, and stamping his foot—"everything in the world—don't you know that?"

It was the old woman who now replied, for she seemed now the most astonished of the party, and catching Martin by the arm, she asked—"Is it old Carr, then, that you are afraid of? He had better not touch a hair of your head!"

"Nonsense—nonsense, granny!" said the

man; "you don't understand what you are talking about. But I see Sir Morley has not heard of the job. Sir, I'm very much obliged to you for your offer, and wont say No, but will just talk to my wife about it after you are gone, if it would not be too much trouble for you to give the orders upon the chance."

"I will not fail to have the place put in order," replied Morley; "and you may be sure that if they do come, they shall be well taken care of. As for yourself, Martin, I can offer you nothing, for your own words have, of course, given me to suspect that you have placed yourself in a situation which precludes me from affording you shelter, or any sort of aid, except of a pecuniary kind. If, however, you are in want of money, all that I have about me is at your service."

"Thank you, sir," said Martin, with a light laugh at the double meaning of that which was about to spring from his lips; "I am very much obliged to you, but I do not want your money, or I would have taken it, I can assure you. — Though that is not true either," he added; "I might have taken a stranger's, but not yours, Sir Morley; but the fact is, I don't want money."

"Of that I am very happy," answered Morley; "but I cannot help expressing a regret, Martin, that you should adhere to a course so dangerous as well as so evil. I thought, when first I saw you, and think still, that you were intended for better things, and might distinguish yourself, and raise yourself high in a good and honourable course."

The man he spoke to cast down his eyes, and gazed musingly upon the ground for several minutes, but he then replied—"Thank you, sir, for your good opinion; but it's all nonsense talking or thinking of such things now—it's too late in the day to mend. The worst of the laws of this country, and of what people call society, is, that they never allow any man to get better. A man may get worse in this world every day, if he likes it; the bad road is always open before him, and plenty there are to drive him on upon it. But if he tries to go back again, sir, to the good road that he has left, there is sure to be some one to bang the turnpike in his face, and stop him ere he has got half a mile. I cannot help thinking, sir, that it is a pity those men who set about making laws and customs, do not recollect that there is such a thing as amending as well as punishing. I believe it

would be better for all of us if they did; for now, even a hardened scoundrel like myself, as they would call me if I were in a prison to-morrow, why, a very little thing would have made me a better man at one time, and I don't believe it would take very much even now. It may be an odd thing to say, for a man who does something wrong every day, that he never does anything that is wrong without being sorry for it very soon after it's done; but yet it is true; and, even now, a word or two of encouragement, such as you spoke to me just this minute, makes me feel quite vexed with myself that I have not gone in the right way instead of the wrong."

"There is some truth in what you say," replied Morley, "that our laws and our customs, in dealing both with man and woman, seem to lose sight altogether of the great object of reformation. Terror is the only instrument we use, and terror never yet reclaimed. Nevertheless, though the path back, Martin, must always be more difficult and laborious than the path onward, still I believe it may be trodden, if a man have a strong heart and a good resolution; and I trust that, when you have made your escape to another country, and are out of danger altogether, you will think of what we

have been saying to-night, and will see whether, in a new world, you cannot live a new life."

"On my soul and honour I will, sir!" replied the man, eagerly. "I'll do my best, at all events. I'll tell you what it is, Sir Morley Ernstein—the thing that ruins half of us is want of hope. The least little bit of hope would very often lead on a man to do much better, but we don't get it, sir. Once we have done amiss, as the world goes now, there's no object in stopping. However, sir, I have had some encouragment, and, as I said just now, I'll do my best, if I can contrive to get off this time."

"I trust you may do both," replied Morley—"I trust you may do both, my good friend, for I believe that you are not without good feelings, if they were well directed. But I will now go on, and before to-morrow night the cottage shall be all ready for your wife and her mother."

"Stay a bit, sir," said Harry Martin; "I'll walk up with you beyond the pitmen's hovels. They are somewhat of a wild set, and some of them may be stirring yet."

Morley threw the rein of his horse over his arm, and walked on with Harry Martin by his side. Most men would have considered it not the safest sort of companionship in the world;

but no idea of danger to himself crossed the young Baronet's mind, and his thoughts, to say the truth, were busy in a struggle which every one must have endured who has felt for his fellow-creatures.

Amongst all the pieces of casuistry which man puts to his own heart, there is none more difficult, I might say more painful, to resolve, than the question of where lenity should stop and just severity begin; how far, in short, compassion for an offender may be extended, without injustice to the innocent and to society. I must not say that Morley felt a strong inclination to aid the man, Martin, in making his escape, for that was not altogether the sensation which affected him; but he did regret sincerely, that what he owed to the laws of his country, prevented him from aiding, in the least degree, the flight of one whom he believed to be formed for better things, and in whom he saw, or thought he saw, a tendency to repentance, which would certainly lead to a new course of life. Nevertheless, he felt that he had no right to place his individual opinion, his hopes or expectations, of the man's reformation in direct opposition to the law of the land, and, consequently, he felt anxious to turn

from the subject as soon as possible, though he felt some difficulty in so doing.

Harry Martin himself, however, soon relieved him by speaking first—"Pray, Sir Morley," he said—"can you tell me what has become of that young scamp, William Barham? I saw him after he escaped from being drowned—which he never will be, if there's truth in the old proverb—for he is as bad a youth as ever lived or died unhanged. He partly put me up to this last job, and then, when it was done, sneaked out of the way somewhere, and I never could get sight of him afterwards."

The recollection of the last time he had seen William Barham was, as the reader may suppose, agitating to Morley Ernstein; but he was more upon his guard upon the present occasion, than when all the painful circumstances of his fate had been suddenly recalled to his mind, a few minutes before, by the questions of the old woman. He paused for a moment, indeed, ere he replied; but he then answered calmly enough—"Not many days ago, he was staying at the house of Mr. Carr, at Yelverly."

"Ha!" replied his companion; "the young villain's betraying me; he is fit to sell his own soul, though it is not worth buying if he did;

but he had better take care what he is about, or I will break his neck for him."

"Do nothing rashly, Martin," replied Morley Ernstein; "he is, I believe, bad enough; but I have a faint recollection of having heard that some connexion or other has been discovered between him and Mr. Carr—some relationship or friendship between their parents—I forget what; but, certainly, it had no reference to you."

"I trust it has not," replied Martin, in the same stern tone with which he had before spoken; but he still seemed dissatisfied, and continued to walk by Morley's side in silence, till they had passed a long row of lowbuilt cottages, and had gone on for about half a mile on the moor. At length he paused, and pointing on the road before him, he said—"That is your way, sir. About a mile on you will find a finger-post, with two roads separating to the right and left; take the left-hand road, and follow it till you come to a village, where you must get further directions. Good night, sir!"

Morley wished him good night, and was about to proceed, but he thought he perceived a degree of hesitation in the man's manner, which made him pause for a moment. "You seem

to have something more to tell me, Martin," he said; "speak without reserve, if you have."

"Why, there is a word or two, sir," replied Harry Martin, approaching close to his horse's side, and speaking in a low tone. "If things go right with me, and I get away, it's all well and good; but you know, sir, matters may go another way, and then the game's up. As for dying, I declare, I care no more about it, than about going to sleep; but you see, sir, there's my poor wife—she is as good a girl as ever lived, and I don't know how or why it is, but since we were married it has made a great difference in me. I am not half so wild as I was before; and I have got a sort of tenderness, if I may call it so, towards all women for her sake. I believe it is, that I did not rightly know what a good woman was before I married her; but it is very different now, and that is the only thing that rests upon my mind. You see, sir, she has never been used to hard work, but has been brought up as a sort of a lady, and if I were gone, what would come of her? I think, if I knew she would be well taken care of, I should not care for anything in life."

"Make your mind easy," said Morley, "though I cannot exactly say what I should be able to

do for her under such circumstances; I will promise you to see her established in some honest way of life—some small school, or other thing, that does not imply any severe exertion."

The man made no answer, but he grasped the young Baronet's hand tight, in a way that was not to be mistaken, and thus they parted.

CHAPTER XVII.

Morley Ernstein rode on more slowly than during the former part of his journey. His mood was changed, another spirit had come over him. It was no longer the rash, and reckless vehemence of bitter, perhaps we might call it angry, disappointment, that tenanted his bosom; but it was the dark, sad, listlessness of a heart which has given up all expectation for itself, and only lives faintly in its sympathies with others. If ever the poet's words were made true, it was in his case, for "black care did, indeed, sit behind the horseman," and was his only companion by the way. His mind rested frequently, it is true, upon the fate and character of the man he had just left, but it was with a vague, careless, indistinctness of thought, very, very different

from the keen and eager scrutiny which he gave to every phase of human life, in former times. He thought too, occasionally, of himself—of the change which he felt had come upon him—of the lifelessness of the world around—of the painful memories of the past—of the dull and cheerless prospects of the future. He asked himself, what he should do to fill up existence? and he answered himself, with a bitter smile—"It will pass somehow, I suppose; and the space which now seems long, will probably then seem short. Man's eye in youth is at the wrong end of the telescope. It is in age that we see clearly how short are the spaces over which we have passed."

Thus musing, he wended on his way, his journey being much like the life he contemplated—dull, gloomy, dark, and long; but yet, mile after mile, slipping away he scarcely knew how. At length, he saw a faint redness in the sky before him, but took little notice, thinking that it was occasioned by another of the waste coal-fires. It grew redder and redder, however, and touches of warm yellow began to brighten the edges of the clouds—

"Can it be morning already?" he said; but

the clear grey which took place of the blackness of night, soon shewed him, that another day had indeed begun.

A little more than an hour after dawn brought him to a bridge over a small stream, but he made his horse pass through the water, and suffered it to pause to drink. As he did so he gazed around him, and his eyes rested upon a scene strongly characteristic of that part of the country.

From the edge of the river stretched up a small field full of ripe corn, which, notwithstanding the advanced period of the year, had not yet felt the sickle. Beyond, the land rose, swelling gradually into a considerable hill, about half way up which appeared an old grey stone mansion, with a wide sort of park before it, spreading down to the edge of the cornfield, and covered with short grass. On either side of the house, stretching half way down the hill, with somewhat prim regularity of outline, was seen a large, dark mass of wood, leaving the open space of park lawn between, unencumbered by a single tree of any kind. The only object that broke the calm, still regularity of the scene was a group of fine deer, which trotted at

an easy pace across the park, as if seeking for some other spot, where the herbage was richer, or the sheltering fern more abundant.

The house itself was of a castellated form, and a part of it had evidently been built at that period when each man was obliged to hold his own with a strong hand, and the sword of justice was impotent to protect those who could not find shelter within walls and battlements. Various plans had been adopted to give modern comforts to the ancient habitation; windows had superseded loop-holes, and gardens had been laid out where the spears once bristled and the cannon roared. Morley did not in the least recollect the mansion, for he had not seen it since he was an infant; but, nevertheless, from the descriptions which he had heard, he instantly recognised the house he was in search of; and, finding his way to a gate, he entered the park, and was soon in the court-yard of his own dwelling.

Servants had gone down before him; everything had been prepared for his reception; the place looked as gay and bright as it was possible to make it; and the time had been, not long before, when Morley would have walked well pleased through the long, wainscoted corridors and quaint old rooms,—would have enjoyed that

calm look of the past which ancient houses have about them; and might have compared it to the tranquil aspect of a good old man at the end of a happy life, and wished that his own latter day might come with as little decay and as much quiet cheerfulness. Now, however, he walked straight to the old drawing-room, without looking either to the right or left, and cast himself down in a chair, each new thing which the hopes of the past had linked to happiness in the future, producing nothing but bitter pain, now that the golden chain was broken by the hand of disappointment. The first sight of the old dwelling had instantly brought back the bitterness to his heart, and the entrance into his home only made him recollect that that home was to be for ever companionless.

His old servant, Adam Gray, had followed him, and marked his haggard eye and faded cheek with pain. He sought for no explanation, however—he wanted none; for, with the instinct of old affection, he had divined the grand cause of the sorrow he beheld, and cared little for the minor particulars. It was wonderful, too, how accurately the old man guessed the course which grief and disappointment would take with his master's mind.

"I am afraid, sir," he said, "that you have been up all night. Had you not better lie down for an hour or two? Your room is quite ready, for we expected you last night, and I waited up till two o'clock, thinking you might come."

"I should not sleep, Adam," replied Morley; "and it is as well to remain awake where I am—where there are things to employ the eyes upon—as to shut out everything but thought, which is not pleasant to me just now, good Adam. Let me have some coffee, my good friend, and afterwards I will walk round the place with you, for I have something to give you in charge, Adam. You must see to it yourself, after I am gone away."

"Gone away, sir!" exclaimed the old man; "I hope you don't intend to go very soon. There is a great deal to be done here, sir—a great deal that would amuse and please you, I am sure."

"It must be done by others," answered Morley, sadly; "I shall return to Morley Court to-morrow morning. There I shall stay but a day or two ere I set out for London. From London I shall most likely go to the Continent; but I

have not fixed upon any plan yet. Get me the coffee, Adam."

It is a sad sign when, in youth—the period of innumerable plans, when everything is to be attempted, and nothing seems impossible—the scheme of the future is left vague and undefined. The prospects, the views, the purposes may change every hour, and afford no indication of anything but youth's bright eagerness; but still each hour must have its plan for the next, or you may well pronounce the heart to be vacant, desolate, or broken. It is my firm belief, that the history of a man's past life, as far, at least, as its happiness or unhappiness is concerned, may almost always be told distinctly from the plans he can form for the future. It is the burden of disappointment that weighs down the butterfly wings of expectation that carry us insects on from flower to flower.

The old man well understood that such is the case; and he grieved more at seeing his master without plans and purposes, than at any of the other signs of listlessness and sorrow which his whole conduct displayed. He brought him the coffee, then, in silence; he laid out the breakfast table with care; he found a thousand little excuses

for lingering in the room; and he watched his master's countenance, with that sort of anxious but humble attachment, which is rarely to be found anywhere but in an old servant or a faithful dog. For, alas! truth and honour, and true, deep love, are jewels more frequently to be found in the plain oak coffer than the gilded casket. At length, he ventured to say, in a low tone, as if it were more an involuntary observation he was making for his own relief, than intended for the ear of the young Baronet—"Well, I did not think Miss Juliet would have done so!"

Morley raised his finger sternly, with a knitted brow, but he only said—"Leave me!" and the old man, seeing that a touch upon the wound was agony, quitted the drawing-room, sorry for the words that he had uttered.

As soon as he was gone, Morley Ernstein rose from his seat, and, with his hands clasped together, and his eyes cast down, strode up and down for several minutes, in bitter meditations. Hitherto the feelings of heart-broken disappointment—disappointment of the best and brightest hopes of his existence—the crushing of the sweetest, the tenderest, the most elevating sensations of his heart, had been unmingled with any other passion. It had been

alone deep sorrow—despair, if one will—but now the words of the old servant threw in a new ingredient.

I have not represented the character of Morley Ernstein as a perfect one, for he was anything but perfect, and now—to use what may be considered a strange expression—one of the most powerful weaknesses of man's nature was called into action by finding that he was an object of commiseration to others. Vanity, oh, reader!—vanity, which lurks in some shape or in some disguise in every human breast, perhaps without exception—vanity, which is the spring of more actions, good as well as bad, noble as well as base, than have ever been catalogued to any other author—vanity, which has made kings and conquerors, prelates and statesmen, saints and hermits—vanity, which has led men to the height of pomp, and the lowest acts of humiliation, was roused in the breast of Morley Ernstein by the one sentence that old Adam Gray had spoken, and took its course according to the peculiarities of his character. He felt himself an object of compassion, and he loved not to be so. There was a feeling of being lowered, degraded, in knowing that his misery had been observed and pitied; and he muttered to himself—

"This must not be: I shall have my tale of disappointment sent over all the world. I shall be called love-sick, broken-hearted; I shall be laughed at by unfeeling puppies, commiserated by sentimental girls, and scorned by the cold and calculating, who know nothing of life but its material things. Though she has contrived to make my existence desolate, and to chill the warm fountain of my heart's blood into ice, yet I must not suffer myself to become an object of contempt or neglect. I must move and act in this world as if it still had matters of interest for me. I must taste of pleasure, since I cannot taste of happiness; and I must have occupation, amusement, gaiety, as I cannot have calm tranquillity and domestic joy. I, too, will do as others do—make my face a mask for my heart, teach my voice to become but as an instrument of music, to give forth what sounds art may make me seek to produce, and shut up my spirit with all the fetters of disappointment heavy upon it, as an unseen captive within the prison of this earthly frame. Such shall be my scheme of life; and, come what may, I will follow it with the stern determination of one who can find for the future no obstacle in all the things of a world, which is now become a place of emptiness

and vanity in his eyes, no guiding channels for his conduct in those customs and usages which have lost their importance for ever. I am afraid, however," he continued, "that I spoke somewhat harshly to that poor old man. Heaven forbid that I should give him pain!—There is nothing upon earth of sufficient value to justify us in making even a worm writhe."

Morley Ernstein sat down, drank some of the coffee, more to shew that he had used the breakfast things set down before him than from appetite, and then rang for his old servant. It was another, however, who now appeared, and Morley had to send for Adam Gray, not indeed with the intention of referring at all to the stern answer he had given, or to anything which had passed, but merely to evince towards him that kindness and confidence which he knew would be the best atonement for any harshness.

"Now, Adam," he said, in a tone not cheerful indeed, but less gloomy than before, "shew me which is my dressing-room, and while I shave and change my clothes, you shall give me some account of all the wonders of Warmstone. Then you shall take a walk with me round the place, and we will talk of the disposal of one or two of the cottages that are vacant."

The old man was well pleased; and, standing by his master's side, while he dressed and refreshed himself after his long night's ride, Adam Gray, with some degree of loquacity, which, though not inseparable from age, is its very frequent companion, proceeded to relate and comment upon a thousand little particulars which he had remarked since his arrival at Warmstone three or four days before. He believed firmly that he was driving from his master's mind some painful remembrances, though, to say the truth, ere he had pronounced a dozen sentences, Morley's mind was far away, and the words were gathered by his ear, bearing but a small part of their meaning with them, like over-ripe corn which drops the grain ere it be garnered. Occasionally, indeed, he saw that the old man paused for an answer, and to satisfy him he replied at random, sometimes successfully as far as sense went, but sometimes with words totally inapplicable to what had gone before, and then Adam Gray explained again, and Morley was obliged to listen more attentively.

At length his toilet was concluded, and, taking his hat and gloves, he sauntered forth, followed by the old servant, half a step behind. It was a pleasant, but somewhat cold day, for the

time of year, and strange were the sensations of the young gentleman as he strolled forward over the short turf, gilded by the autumnal sunshine, with the woods just beginning to grow brown upon their edges, resting calm in the tranquil noontide, and an antique solitude of aspect spread over the whole place. Guided through the tall oaks and beeches on the right, Adam Gray led him to the old pleasure grounds of the castle, where high walls of thick black yew, trimmed with the utmost neatness, flanked broad gravel walks, and protected from the wind various formal beds of flowers, which, though well kept, and not selected amiss, were shewing a good deal the hand of autumn. Half way down the principal walk was a small grassy mound with a sun-dial, on one side of which was inscribed the name of some former proprietor of the castle, who had erected it, and thus thought to save himself for a little from oblivion, while on the other side was inscribed a quaint old rhyme, shewing the vanity of all temporal things, as if intended as a curious comment on the vain memento of the opposite face.

A few yards beyond the time-teller appeared the first living thing which Morley had seen

since he issued forth from the house. It was an old gardener, who seemed in shape to have imitated the sun-dial, with the erection of which, it is probable, his birth was coeval. He was habited in a longwaisted coat, with broad flaps and large pockets, and his breeches, which scarcely covered his knees and mounted no farther than his hips, displayed a portion of a coarse, but very white shirt about his stomach, and were fastened with large silver buckles just above the calves of his legs. Similar buckles of still vaster dimensions appeared on his shoes, and the costume was completed by a pigtail and a low-crowned broad-brimmed hat. He was hale and hearty, though upwards of eighty-five, and his profession was marked by the spade on which he leant, and which had been familiar with his hand for more than two-thirds of a century.

Reader, will you forgive me when I acknowledge, that this antique gardener has nothing to do with our history; but yet I could not forbear giving you this little picture of a sort of being which has passed away for ever. Morley advanced to the old man and spoke a few words to him, the answers to which were as quaint as his attire; and when his young master had passed on, the

gardener continued to rest upon his spade, and look after him with an expression of calm, speculative thought, evidently regarding him merely as a new sort of plant, and wondering, perhaps, what sort of flower or fruit he would bear.

From the garden, Morley and his old servant proceeded across the park to the little village which lay upon the property at the distance of about a mile from the house. Morley walked through it, spoke to the different cottagers, enquired into their situation, gave some directions regarding them, and then told Adam Gray to take him to the two small houses which he had said were untenanted. The old man then led him back upon the road towards Warmstone Castle, but turning, soon after, up a broad well-kept path by the side of a stream, he conducted his master into a little glen, at the end of which might be seen a small water-mill. Some way further down, however, between the mouth of the glen and the mill, were two pretty stone cottages joined together, with a little sweep of the hill behind them, and a garden in the front coming down to the path.

"You seem to know this place well, Adam," said Morley, "though you cannot have been much here."

"Oh, bless you! yes, sir," replied the man. "In your father's time we used to spend four or five months at Warmstone every year, and as it was his particular wish that it should be well kept up, Mr. Hamilton has sent me over once or twice a year since."

Morley made no reply, but walked on with the melancholy feeling of the passing away of all things more strong upon him than ever; and he could not help thinking that the lingering of earthly affection, which teaches us in the hour of death to care for even inanimate things, and provide for their preservation after we ourselves have fallen into the ruin of the tomb, is like the clinging love which the human heart will sometimes feel towards a fellow-being, the thoughtful tenderness, the longing aspiration for the happiness of another, which will continue to exist throughout our being, long after the despair of ever uniting our fate with hers, has trampled out the selfishness of passion. He felt that such was the case with himself; and that, though from some unexplained causes, Juliet Carr had left him hopeless and miserable, with a heart dead to all the fond expectations of love, yet for her, and for her happiness, he would always pray, would think of her when

he was careless of himself, and feel an interest in her when all the rest of the world was nothing but an empty show.

He stopped opposite the gate of the cottage garden, while the old man went in and opened the doors and windows. Morley then shook off the load of thought, and looked round the place, examining the different rooms, and seeing that all was in a state of good repair. Although a place destined to be the scene of busy life always looks somewhat melancholy when vacant, there was an air of comfort about the cottage which satisfied the young Baronet, and turning to Adam Gray, he said—"You must stay here a day or two, Adam, after I have gone to town. Have a sufficient quantity of furniture, of a suitable kind, brought down here from the castle, and let the garden be put in somewhat better order. Probably to-morrow, or the next day, you will have an application about the cottage from some people whom I have promised to let it to rent free—a respectable-looking old woman and her daughter, a younger one, with a little boy, her child. The younger woman—and, indeed, both—have been in a better situation. You will therefore do everything to make them comfortable."

The old man gazed in his master's face for a moment, without reply; but then enquired—"May I ask what is the old lady's name, Sir Morley? for a great many old ladies might come, you know."

"That is not likely," replied Morley; "but I have almost forgotten her name, my good Adam, though it is one, I believe, you ought to know, for she lived near Morley Court, in my father's time. Oh, I remember now!—her name is More, the widow of Serjeant More."

The old man's face changed in a moment—"The wife of Serjeant More come back again!" he exclaimed. "We all heard that she had died in India. Ha! I shall like to have a chat with her, of old times. Every one said she was a very good woman—too good a woman to do a wicked thing—but yet people did suspect that she did one thing which was not quite right ——"

"Well, my good Adam," said Morley, interrupting him, "the scandals of the past have, doubtless, more interest for you than for me. You will have plenty of time to hold any conversation you like with the old lady, for I shall not want you in town till to-morrow week. In the meantime, however, you must give directions for

taking care of the horses, and see that everything be put in good order, both at Morley Court and here, for I am going to the Continent, good Adam, and shall most likely be absent many months."

"I hope you are not going without me, sir," exclaimed the old man. "I would fain go with you, if you please; for if you leave me behind, I shall take a sad fancy that I shall never see you again."

"It shall be as you like, Adam," replied Morley. "It is the custom, my good old friend, on these occasions, to take with one a personage, who, according to the law of fashion, must not be one's own countryman, nor have one single tie to the master whom he serves. His business is, to pay postmasters and postilions more than they ought to have, to aid the landlords of inns, and the officers of Custom-houses, the cicerone and the waiter in plundering his employer to the best of his abilities, to run away from him in case of danger, and to appropriate such parts of his goods and chattels, in case of sickness or death, as may be most easily secreted. This personage is called a courier; and as I go, you know, in the quality of an English gentleman of fashion, such a

piece of roguery is, of course, a necessary appendage to my travelling carriage. You may go with me too, however, if you like; but there is one bargain which I must make with you.—no complaints or representations in regard to the courier! You must even let him cheat me according to the best esteemed mode, till I find him out myself in something too gross, and then——"

"What will you do then, sir?" demanded Adam Gray, in a quiet tone.

"Throw him out of the window," answered Morley.

CHAPTER XVIII.

We must pass over the space of two days, and then return to the cottage, of which we have spoken in the last chapter, having now to dwell for some time upon the fate and history of persons in a very different station of life, and of a very different character from Sir Morley Ernstein. Yet let not the reader think that we thus go from scene to scene, and from person to person—leaving those for whom we have just created an interest, almost as soon as that interest is excited, and turning to others whom the reader cares little about—from any wantonness of imagination, or carelessness of plan. On the contrary, it is done deliberately and designedly; not only because it is in the ordinary course of nature, and because the fates of the

great and the small, the good and the bad, the wise and the foolish, are linked together in such a manner throughout the whole scheme of human life, that they all affect each other in the most intimate manner, but also because it is absolutely necessary to pursue such a course, in order that the reader may, in the least degree, comprehend the story of this book. Let him be forewarned, then, that if he misses one chapter, one page, or perhaps one sentence, he may very probably lose the key to the whole, and understand no more at the end than he did at the beginning; for the destiny of each person herein spoken of, was so twined and intertwisted with that of the others, by the decree of fate, that the life, property, and happiness of the greatest and the best amongst them, was often entirely dependent upon the actions of the least and the worst, and the ultimate result of all was brought about by circumstances that seemed the most trivial.

To the cottage, then, we must turn, on the evening of the second day after that on which Sir Morley Ernstein had visited it; premising, that the young Baronet had set off for London on the day after we last saw him. The little tenement had undergone a considerable change,

and though it may seem strange to attribute anything like poetry to tables and chairs, yet I must say there was the poetry of comfort about it—ay, dear reader, there is a poetry in anything which calls up before the eye of imagination all the sweet relationships of domestic life; the household joys, the bright hearth's happy circle, parental fondness, the husband's protecting care, the wife's devoted love. There is a poetry in it all, the blandest, the most soothing to the human heart; for it is the poetry of the purest happiness that man is permitted to know on earth. That sort of poetry had been produced in the cottage I have spoken of, by the change from the vacant rooms, and dull uncovered walls, to the cheerful, furnished cottage-kitchen, with the bright fire blazing on the hearth, the long row of shelves loaded with various articles for daily use, all clean and shining; the polished oaken table in the midst, the stools and seats around, the large chair by the fire, and a thousand little objects, not of absolute necessity, perhaps, but which all more or less contribute to comfort; for good old Adam Gray had taken an interest in the orders his master gave him, and had forgotten nothing—no, not even a small crib for the child.

At the moment that we speak of, the elder woman, whom the little boy himself has introduced to us by the name of Granny, was seated in the arm-chair by the fire, and looking round with a feeling of relief and satisfaction, though her face was somewhat worn with the anxiety and watching which she had undergone during the last week, and with being hunted, as she expressed it, like a wild beast, over the moors. The boy, her grandson, was on the floor near her feet, rolling to and fro a large round mass of wood, which was used to keep the cottage-door open in fine weather; while his mother was gazing down upon him with a look of sorrowful affection; and in her eyes might be read deep and sad comments upon the fate of her child, upon human love, and human errors. Oh! could one have seen into her heart at that moment, how touching—how strangely touching—would have been the terrible blending of intense affection, and strong anxiety, and profound sorrow, which would have been found there as she gazed upon her boy!

The two women had been in the house for several hours, but had been busily engaged in arranging all things in their future abode, so that this was the first moment that leisure had

been found for calm contemplation. Neither mother nor daughter spoke for some time, and nothing was heard but the ticking of the clock behind the door, and the rolling to and fro of the wooden ball by the little boy. Suddenly, however, there was a footfall in the garden, and the younger woman started and listened, but the moment after she shook her head, saying—"It is not he."

The well-known music of the step we love, the sweetest of all sounds to those who have been long absent from the arms of affection, was not there. It was the slow and heavy tread of an old man, and in another minute, after tapping at the door, good Adam Gray entered the cottage and approached the fire. He had not thought fit to be present when the little party took possession of their new dwelling; but he now came, both to see that his young master's orders had been executed, and to satisfy, in some degree, his own curiosity upon more than one point.

The younger woman had said—"Come in!" and her mother had turned round to see who it was that entered, but the eye of the latter rested upon the form of the old butler without the slightest sign of recognition. He gazed

upon her in return as he advanced; but whether it was that his memory was better, or that she was less changed by time than he was, it was very evident, from the expression of his countenance, that he saw in her an old acquaintance.

"Good evening," he said—"good evening. I hope you find everything comfortable here. It was my young master's strict orders that I should do everything to make you so."

"I thank you, sir," replied the younger woman, with a tone and manner that would not have disgraced any society, "we are deeply indebted to Sir Morley Ernstein, and have found everything far more comfortable than we could even hope, certainly far more than we had any right to expect."

"I am glad to hear it—I am glad to hear it," said good Adam Gray. "But by your leave, ma'am, I will take a chair. I have come here as an old friend, Mrs. More; do you not recollect me? Do you not recollect Adam Gray?"

The old woman looked in his face with some surprise—"And are you Mr. Gray, the butler?" she asked. "Why, your hair used to be as black as jet, and you seemed to me taller by a couple of inches."

"Ay," answered old Adam, "'tis very true,

good dame—'tis very true indeed; but time, you know, will whiten the hair and bow the body, and I do not stand near so tall as I once did. Good lack! when I look in the looking-glass, I can scarcely recollect what I was like twenty years ago. You are much changed, too, Dame More, though not so much as I am, I think. You were a buxom woman in those days, and we were all sorry when you left the village, though some said it was for your own good; but others shook the head, you know, Dame More."

"Well they might," said the old woman, in a low, sad tone, fixing her eyes upon the fire—"well they might, indeed!"

Adam Gray and his old acquaintance sat silent for several minutes, evidently engaged in meditations over the past; and the younger woman, feeling, perhaps, that their thoughts were busy about things which were not familiar to her own mind, laid hold of the arm of her little boy, who was staring inquisitively in the face of the stranger, saying—"Come, Dick, it is time for you to go to bed, boy, and rest your young limbs."

The child went away willingly enough, and the old man and woman were left alone.

"Well, Mrs. More," said Adam Gray, "I

am glad that we have met once again in life, though I suppose you will be as silent about all the stories of those days as you were when last I saw you."

"I don't know that," answered the old woman, musing; "times have changed, Mr. Gray, and I may not care to talk about things now that I did not choose to talk about then. Sir Morley Ernstein has been kind to me, too——"

"And I am sure so was his father," said the butler.

"Yes," replied she, "so he was; but, as I have said, times have changed, and those who were then befriending me and mine, may now be persecuting us. However, I shall say nothing till I see what comes of it."

"I should like very much, however, to hear all that story," rejoined Adam Gray, "and I am sure I would not say a word to any one. It is only for my own satisfaction I speak, and to know if my good master was right or wrong in what he said."

The old woman gazed for an instant down upon the ground, then turned her eyes upon the old man with a very strange expression, saying—"He was wrong, Mr. Gray; and I told him what was true. Yet, odd as it may

seem, he was right too, and I deceived him. I will tell you what, you were always a good-hearted man, and a sensible one, and some day or another I'll tell you the whole story, but it sha'n't be now."

"It must be very soon, then," said Adam Gray, "for I am going to London in two days, and to the Continent immediately after."

"That will do!" cried the old woman—"that will do quite well."

"Do you mean when I come back again?" demanded Adam Gray. "Who can tell, good dame, when that may be? Who can tell whether it ever will be?"

"I don't mean that," said the old woman, somewhat peevishly, "but I mean that you are not likely to tell it again till I am dead and buried, and then you may tell it if you like; so you shall hear all before you go, if you will promise to keep it a secret, as I have done, till I be gone to join my husband and my son."

"Why, where are they?" asked Adam Gray. "I thought you were a widow, Dame More. Did you leave your husband and your son in India?"

"Yes," replied the old woman, fixing her eyes upon the fire—"I left them in the grave."

The good old servant seemed somewhat shocked that he had called up such painful memories, and after remaining silent for a short time, Dame More, as he called her, went on—"There is many a thing, Mr. Gray," she said, "that I may weep for, and many a thing that I wish had gone otherwise; but there is only one thing that I repent, and that is what we are now talking about. If you will come to me to-morrow, however, I will tell you all about it, for I do wish some one person to know the thing besides myself. Your master is too young, or I would have told him; and Harry, my girl's husband, is too wild and not to be trusted; and if I told Jane herself, she would never keep it from her husband; so I will tell you, because I believe you have always been an honest man—I should like to know that Harry gets safe away first, however, for if that man persecutes him, I will stop him, or have vengeance."

"Vengeance!" observed the old man—"vengeance, my good dame, is like a sword without a hilt, sure to cut the hands of those that use it."

"It may be so, Mr. Gray," replied the old woman—"it may be so, indeed, but I must save him, for my poor girl's sake."

"I do not exactly understand what you

mean," said Adam Gray. But the old woman shook her head, replying, "You had better not. However, I will tell you at all events, for it is fit that some one should know. Life is uncertain at the best, and at my years it's but like the dying flame of a candle, flickering up and down before it goes out for ever.—Come, you shall hear the story now," she continued; "but first let me go and tell the girl not to come down. Poor Jane! she has enough sad secrets of her own without having to bear mine too."

The old woman rose from her chair, supporting herself by the arm, for she seemed somewhat stiff, and was turning towards the door which led to the staircase, when her daughter's step was heard descending quickly, and Jane Martin entered with an eager look, saying—"He is there—he is there! I heard his step in the garden. I am sure he is there!" and as she spoke, she turned her eyes with an apprehensive glance from the countenance of her mother to that of Adam Gray.

"You may trust him—you may trust him!" cried the old woman. "Open the door, Jane, and see. Do not be afraid, girl—you may trust him, I say."

The younger woman approached the door

with a quiet and noiseless step, and lifting the latch, looked out. A quick and eager respiration was all that was heard, but the moment she had opened the door, she darted out, and returned the instant after, with her fair slight form clasped round by the powerful arm of her husband.

The eyes of Harry Martin rested at once upon Adam Gray, as he sat by the fire, but it was with no expression of apprehension, and he answered some words which his wife whispered rapidly to him, by saying—"I understand—I understand, Jane."

Adam Gray, however, saw at once that there was something more in the situation of the parties than had been communicated to him by his master; and, being a prudent and sagacious man, though not without his share of curiosity, he rose after a few brief words had passed between him and the rest, and took his leave, promising to return on the following day, and have a further chat with Mrs. More.

The night was somewhat dark as the old butler issued forth, and, accustomed as his eyes had lately been to the light within the cottage, he could scarcely see his way along the narrow gravel foot-path which led from the door to the

end of the little garden. When he reached the low gate, however, a sudden light, proceeding from some object which he could not distinguish, came in his face and nearly blinded him, but the moment after, it ceased, and he caught the faint outline of a man standing close by the palings.

The appearance of this personage, who seemed to have a dark lantern with him, was not at all satisfactory to good Adam Gray, but judging that civility would be the best policy, he merely said, "Good night," and passed through the gate. His friend with a lantern made no reply, and Adam hurried down the little path which led towards the mansion house, not by any means sure that certain notes, together with sundry round pieces of gold and silver, which at that moment tenanted his breeches pocket, would be permitted to remain in occupation till he reached Warmstone Castle.

On arriving at the high road, however, he saw another man advancing rapidly towards him, but bearing in no degree the aspect of a person of that neighbourhood. The stranger stopped exactly opposite to him, but seemed more inclined to examine than to annoy him, and suffered him to pass on, replying, "Good

night," to Adam's salutation, in a civil tone, but without any Northumbrian accent. The sight of a post-chaise, standing in the road at some distance, put an end to the good old man's apprehensions, though it did not clear up the mystery; but wisely judging that the affair was no business of his, he made the best of his way back to the castle, without taking any farther notice, or enquiring into things that did not concern him.

CHAPTER XIX.

It was nearly twelve o'clock at night, and Harry Martin stood with his wife, gazing down upon their sleeping child. Curious as are all the contrasts which life presents, there are few more extraordinary, more full of deep and strange interest, than the contrast between the vices and strong passions of unbridled manhood, and the calm reproachful innocence of infancy. Oh! what a mirror it holds up to shew man, hardened by sin, and strife, and selfishness, what he once was, what he might still have been; and yet, how seldom do we take the reproof to our hearts, how rarely do we apply to ourselves the comment which is secretly made within us. The bold, reckless man who stood there and gazed, felt a deep strain of solemn

sensations, mingling with the feelings of paternal love, which the sight of his child called forth. But he asked himself not why or how it was that he experienced a sorrowful emotion totally distinct from the idea of parting from the beloved, as he gazed down upon the sleeping boy—an emotion which, if he had investigated all the causes, he would have found to be the voice of memory reproaching him for the innocence he had cast away.

"Well, Jane," he said, at length, "it is no use lingering—I must go. It would have been wiser, perhaps, not to come, but I could not go without seeing you again, my dear girl. Six hours now will bring me to the coast, and then the lugger the man talked of will soon take me to Liverpool, and the 'Mary Anne' sails on Saturday morning; so I shall soon be on my way to another far country, and you must follow as soon as may be—Hark! I thought your mother was gone to bed!"

"It is only the kitchen window," said his wife; "it makes that noise when the wind shakes it."

"You are sure that you have money enough for all that you want?" continued her husband.

"Quite sure," she answered; "more than

enough, Harry. You know I have not been accustomed to such extravagance as you have taught me. I can do upon very little, and the passage-money I will put by and keep, without——"

"Hark!" he exclaimed, grasping her arm, and looking with a wild and eager gaze towards the door. "There is certainly some one below."

Jane turned as pale as death, for she distinctly heard a step, but she lost not her courage —her husband's life was at stake, and the resolute spirit of deep love rose up within her.

"Out, through that room behind," she said; "the window is not high; then up the side of the hill, there are woods and moors. I will go down and stop them. Away, Harry, away!" and printing one kiss upon his cheek, she darted towards the staircase, and ran down, exclaiming, in a tone of alarm that needed no affectation to assume—"Who is there?—There is surely some one in the house! Mother, mother!" she was heard to exclaim aloud; "here are strange men in the house! Who are you?—what do you want here?"

"It's no use talking, ma'am," said a voice the moment after, proceeding from a stout, thickset

personage, who stood in the middle of the kitchen floor, while another man was thrusting himself through the lattice window. "We want just to say a word or two to Mr. Martin, and we must say it, too. He knows that the game's up well enough, so it's no use dodging about in this way."

The wife, however, continued to stand in the doorway that led to the stairs, calling out aloud, "Mother! mother!"

Even as she spoke, there were the sounds of a window thrown open above, a leap, and steps running over the greensward; and Jane, giving a wild scream, fell forward upon the floor.

The officer, for such the person was whom she found in the occupation of the kitchen below, sprang over her, and rushed up stairs; old Mrs. More came down in her night-gear, and raised her daughter fainting from the floor; and the other officer, who had been scrambling in by the window, made his exit by the door, and ran round to the back of the house. Numerous cries, shouts, and directions, were then heard, vociferated by the man above, who at length leaped out of the window himself, and seemingly took his way over the hill. Comparative silence succeeded, though voices, shouting to

each other, were still heard faintly, and Jane was raising her head in her mother's arms, and enquiring—"Is he safe?" when the distant report of a pistol came upon the wind, then some fresh calling; and then all was silent. Jane and the old woman listened with eager and beating hearts, but not a sound more reached them to give them any satisfaction. At length, the child in the room above, disturbed in its sleep by all that had taken place, began to cry aloud, and the half-distracted mother ran up to soothe it.

Still no further sound broke upon the anxious ear from the hill side, and hour after hour passed by without tale or tidings. Jane lay down upon her bed towards the morning, and wept with fear and agitation, but she slept not. At length the grey dawn appeared, and she rose to go forth and see if she could gather anything to calm her anxiety, from the appearance of the footsteps on the hill side. At the door, however, she was met by one of the men whom she had seen the night before. He had a dogged, sullen look, which she thought might proceed from disappointment, and that itself was a relief to her; but when he said, in a civil tone — "Good morning, ma'am, I have come to search the house," the poor girl could

have embraced him, for she misconstrued his words, and imagined that he was still in pursuit of her husband.

"You may search as much as you please," she said, with a lightened heart; "you will find nobody here."

"As to nobody," replied the officer, "I suppose you are right, ma'am; but it's not body, but thing I'm looking for. We've got his body safe enough."

"What do you mean?" exclaimed Jane, nearly sinking to the earth, while a new terror took possession of her heart. "His body!—you have not killed him?"

"Oh, no, no!" cried the officer; "he's safe and hearty, ma'am, don't be afraid. I was only speaking as the lawyers do. We caught him in the wood over the hill there, and we shall soon have his body into court, for the assizes are just coming on, you know, and he's gone over to Doncaster in a shay, which we had all ready for him, quite like a gentleman, I can assure you. These foolish country constables would never have caught him. They can deal with a stray thief, or a horse-stealer, or any of your petty-larceny rogues, as the gentleman says in the play; but they don't know how to manage a

regular professional man at all. So it is lucky for Mr. Martin, too, that they had us down from London, for he'll be treated quite politely, you may be sure. Howsoever, I must just go in and search the house, ma'am, for some of the things may be here, you know."

This long oration had fallen upon the ears of Jane like her husband's knell of death, and retreating into the cottage kitchen, she sank down on a chair, letting the man proceed with his search as he would. That search disturbed, as a natural consequence, the mother of the unfortunate wife; and while the poor girl sat by herself, with her head drooping and her hands clasped on her knee, the image of disconsolate bereavement, she heard Dame More's voice in eager conversation with the officer, and at length distinguished the words—"I will prove him innocent. Do not you be so confident, for you shall hear another story at the trial."

"What, you will prove an alibi, my good woman?" said the officer, in a sneering tone; "but that's an old go—it wont do this time. Juries are getting accustomed to alibis; they don't answer now;—or, mayhap, you committed the burglary yourself, and, if so, you had better come along with me to Doncaster."

"I did not commit it myself," replied the old woman, in a stern tone—"I did not commit it myself, nor can you prove that he committed it."

"Come, come," said the officer—"this is all gammon. What's in this box, old lady? that's what we want to see at present."

"Search, and you will see," answered Mrs. More. "We have nothing to conceal from you here!"

"That's coming it strong, howsoever," replied the man; and, leaving him to pursue his search as he pleased, the old lady descended to comfort her daughter.

"Don't be afraid, Jane," she said—"don't be afraid; they shall do nothing to him. It were worth as much as that old miser's life, to hurt a hair of his head. Don't be afraid, Jane, but put on your bonnet, my girl, run up to the castle, and tell the old man Gray to come down and speak to me. I might die, or some accident might happen, so I had better see him before I set out."

With trembling hands—but little reassured by what her mother said, and, unfortunately, but too certain of her husband's guilt—the poor girl put on her bonnet, and hastened, as fast as

her limbs would carry her, up to Warmstone Castle. Before she returned again with Adam Gray, after about half an hour's absence, the officer had completed his search, and had left the house, swearing, with an oath, that it was very strange he had been able to discover nothing bearing in the least degree upon the robbery which had been committed. Jane found her mother putting on the boy's clothes, and, taking him out of the old lady's hands, she left her to speak with Adam Gray alone. On coming down again, both the child and herself were completely dressed, as if to go upon a journey; and the eagerness of her look amounted almost to wildness, as, in answer to her mother's question of where she was going, she replied—"You know I must get to Doncaster as fast as I can, that I may be with him. Think of his being in prison, mother, and alone!"

"Nay, nay, Jane," replied her mother—"stay a bit, my girl—they would not let you be with him even if you were there; but this good gentleman, Mr. Gray, says he will take us all over in the chaise, with which he is going to drive back to Morley Court to-morrow. It will be a sad thing for me to see all those places again; but never mind, I will go."

"I cannot stay till to-morrow," cried the younger woman. "I would rather walk, mother—indeed I would. My heart will break if I do not go to him directly;" and she burst into tears.

Adam Gray, in the meanwhile, had stood with his eyes fixed upon the floor, musing deeply, as if some subject of extraordinary interest occupied him altogether. It very often happens, however, that the mere corporeal senses, like servants afraid of disturbing their master when he is busy, receive and retain impressions, which they do not communicate to the intellectual soul, till after she has fully discussed and dismissed some particular subject with which she is occupied, or till the urgency of external applications compel them to break in upon her meditations. It was so in the present instance; the ear of Adam Gray had heard all that had passed, but his mind was so fully engaged with the conversation which had taken place between him and Mrs. More, that he had not given any attention to what was passing, till the tears of the young woman roused him from his reverie, and then the ear conveyed to his mind all that it had collected.

"There is no use," he said, addressing Jane,

" of your trying to go on foot. You do not know what a distance it is, and you will be there twice as soon by going with me. Besides, if it comes to that, and you are so very anxious, I could set out to-day, about three o'clock. We shall get to Greta Bridge by ten, and then there will be the coach to-morrow, which will land you at Doncaster in the evening. If you were to set off on foot this minute, it would take you four days, or more, do what you would."

" Oh, the shortest—the shortest!" cried Jane. " But will they not let me be with him, mother? Did you say they will not let me be with him?"

" No, indeed, my dear child," replied her mother, " that will they not; but he shall soon be with you. Be comforted, Jane—be comforted."

The poor girl, however, could receive no comfort; and, to say the truth, she trusted not to her mother's promises, for she believed them to be solely intended to soothe and tranquillize her. Her whole thoughts, however, were bent upon setting off as soon as possible, and she wandered about without occupation, till at length, about half-past two, for the good old man was earlier than his hour, a boy ran up

the little glen from the high road, to say that Mr. Gray was waiting, and to carry down anything that was to go.

Never did journey seem so long as the drive from Warmstone to Greta Bridge, to poor Jane; and to say sooth, the horse, though strong and well fitted for such a journey, was not the swiftest that was ever put in harness, nor was Mr. Gray the most dashing of charioteers. At length, however, they reached the borders of Yorkshire, and put up at the little inn at Greta, where Adam Gray's well-known face procured them instantly a warm reception from the shrewd Yorkshire landlord.

The good butler took care that the two women under his charge should be well treated in all respects; but Jane and her boy retired to rest almost immediately, leaving old Dame More once more alone with her ancient acquaintance. They remained together, in earnest conversation, for two or three hours, and Mr. Gray, in the course of the evening, called for pen, and ink, and paper, so that it was evident to the landlord some business of importance was being transacted between his two guests.

On the following morning the tax cart was

sent back to Northumberland, and, proceeding in the coach, which at that day was not altogether so rapid a conveyance as at present, the whole party were, ere long, set down at Doncaster, where the old servant of Sir Morley Ernstein passed the night, for the kindly purpose of putting his two companions into what he called the way of doing for themselves at Doncaster. He was up early on the following morning, and was enjoying the sunshine for five minutes before breakfast at the door of the inn, when the landlord himself sauntered out, with a—"Good morning, Mr. Gray! So Sir Morley is gone to London, I hear; an odd time of the year to go to London, too!"

"He has some business there," replied Adam Gray, laconically. "Pray what is doing in Doncaster, Mr. Beilby?"

"Oh, nothing much to talk of," answered the landlord. "Yesterday there was a great piece of work, for they brought in the man who robbed Mr. Carr's house at Yelverly, not long ago. They have been looking after him for the last fortnight, or more, but he always managed to give them the slip till the other day, when they caught him in Northumberland, up somewhere in your parts, I believe; and a prodigious num-

ber of people there were to see him.—A fine-looking fellow he is, too, and set them all at defiance. He would not say a word before the magistrates; and, indeed, as Mr. Carr was too ill to attend, little Jeremy Sharpset, the lawyer, who appeared for the prisoner, insisted that they should discharge him, or, at the worst, remand him."

"And did they remand him?" exclaimed Adam Gray.

"Oh! not they," replied Mr. Beilby; "they would not hear any nonsense, but committed him to York Castle, at once."

Adam Gray heard the tidings in silence, and turned into the inn to communicate the news he had obtained to those who were more interested in the matter than himself.

END OF VOL. II.

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